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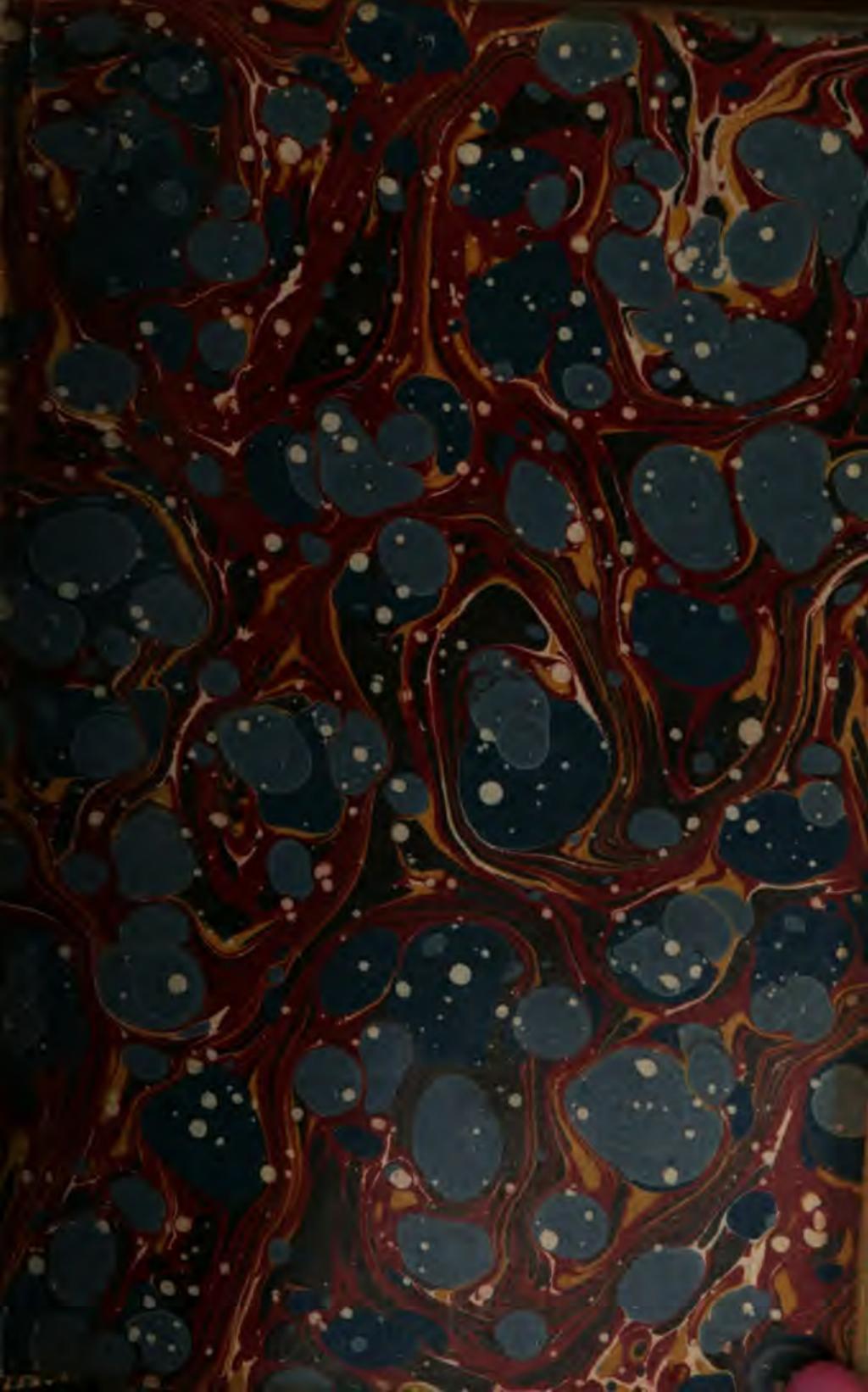
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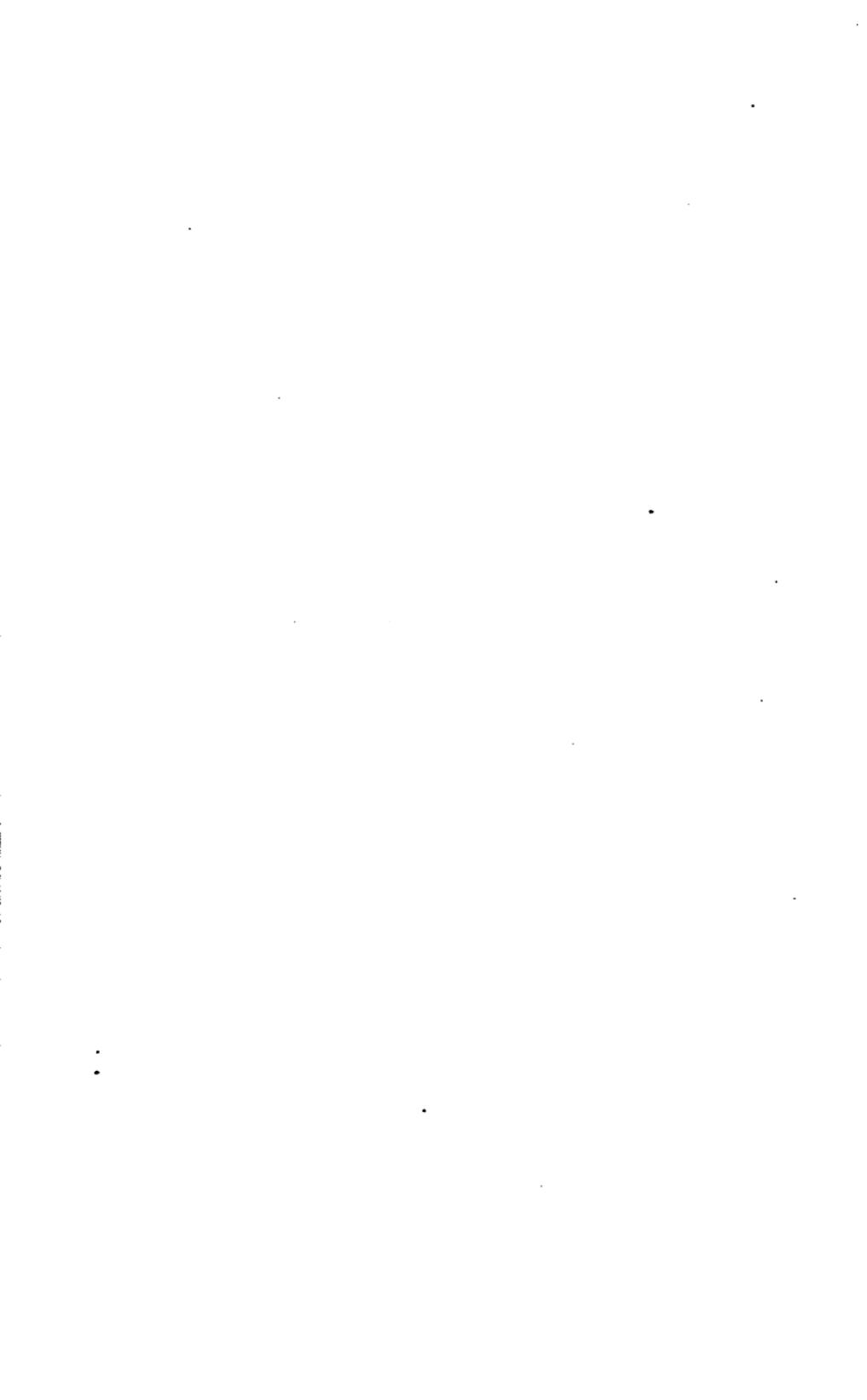


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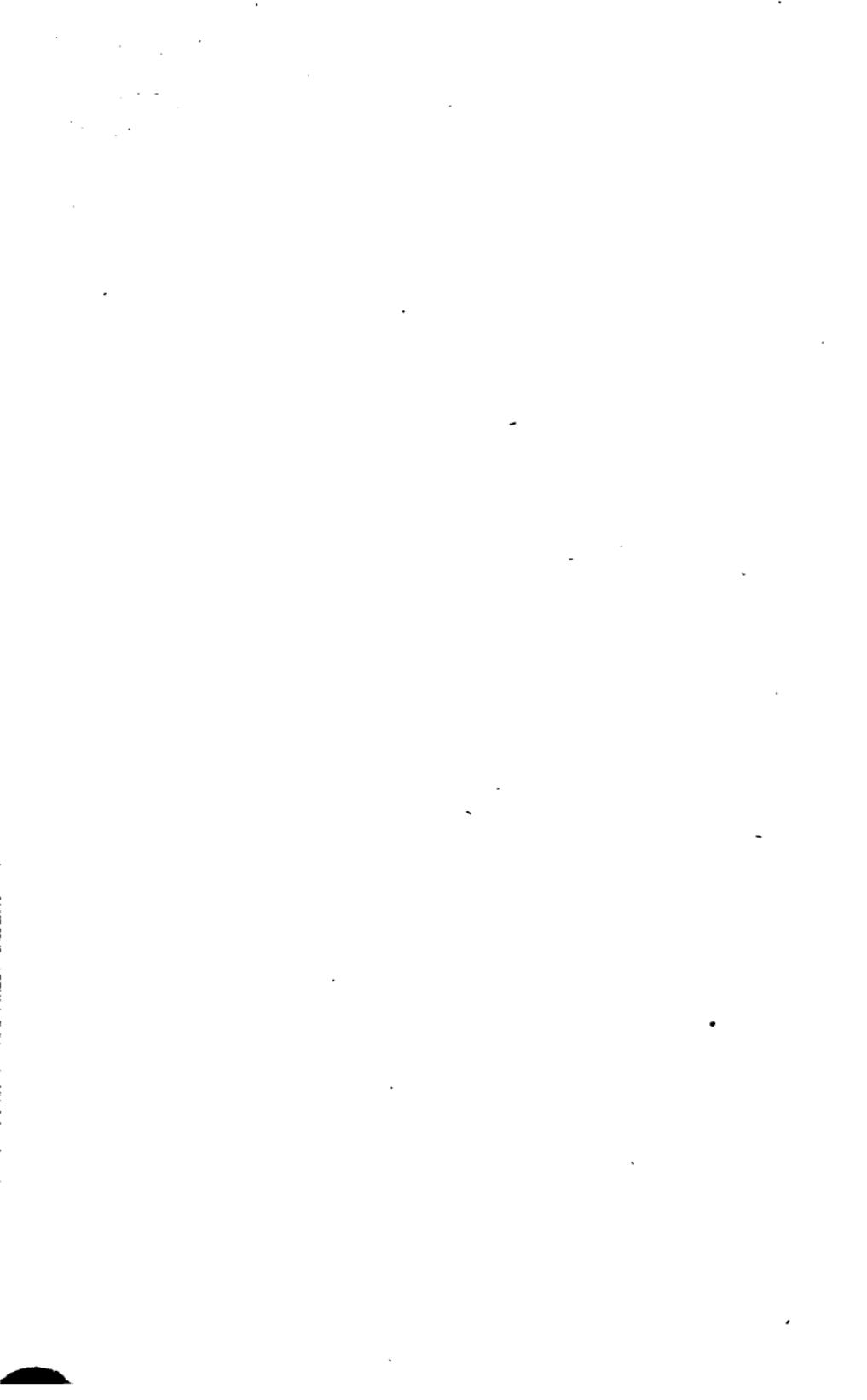


MARK PHILIPS.









THE LIFE AND TIMES
OF
GEORGE VILLIERS,
DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

FROM ORIGINAL AND AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

BY MRS. THOMSON,
AUTHOR OF
"MEMOIRS OF THE COURT OF HENRY THE EIGHTH,"
"LIFE OF SIR WALTER RALEGH,"
"MEMOIRS OF SARAH, DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH,"
&c. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,
18, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1860.

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Br 1852.35.14 (2)



LONDON:
PRINTED BY R. BORN, GLOUCESTER STREET,
REGENT'S PARK.

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LIFE AND TIMES OF
G E O R G E V I L L I E R S.

CHAPTER I.

THE English nation continued, during the spring and summer of the year 1623, in anxious expectation of decisive news from Spain. Nothing could exceed the universal interest which this famous treaty of marriage between Charles and the Infanta inspired; nor had any subject so completely engrossed the public mind since the time of Henry the Eighth, when the ill-omened marriage of that prince with a daughter of Spain was first concerted. For England, be it observed, had known no male unmarried heir-apparent since that period, except the youthful and estim-

able Edward the Sixth, whose career was closed before he could be made the subject of political alliances.

There were many who looked with sentiments which state matters did not influence upon the proposed marriage of two individuals whose rank was their least merit. According to report, the Infanta was possessed of qualities not inferior in excellence to those of Katherine of Arragon, whilst in other attributes she was infinitely more attractive than that ill-starred princess. Her beauty, her accomplishments, her piety, had acquired for her the appellation of the "Rare Infanta;" and hence she was esteemed to be a fitting consort for one whose elegance of mind, whose courtesy, and princely grace were transcended by the purity of his moral conduct, the firmness of his religious opinions, and the affectionate disposition of his heart.

In his position as a private individual, Charles was pre-eminently amiable; and, at that period, the public could only judge of him as they would of any other irresponsible youth of great expectations. The vital faults of his heart, and the real weakness of his character, soft and infirm, yet incrusted with obstinacy and prejudice, were not only not apparent, but unsuspected.

The majority of the nation, however, viewed

the Spanish alliance with interest, chiefly as affecting the long agitated question of the Palatinate, which James pretended, and, perhaps, believed, it was destined to settle to the satisfaction of the people.

It was therefore with something like consternation at first, although the event was afterwards hailed with joy, that the rupture of the treaty was seen afar off, by signs which appeared at first gradually, and afterwards plainly, upon the political horizon.

The question of the dispensation was the first known impediment; and the news from Spain were inauspicious. To the surprise of everyone, almost the next letter from the Prince and Duke announced their intention to return home, even should the expected dispensation not arrive before they could sail; “wherefore,” they wrote, “it was fitting that no time nor charge should be spared” in sending out the fleet which was to convey them to England; and begged that it might “be well chosen,” because they thought that the King, Queen, and all the Court of Spain would see it.

This letter was dated on the twenty-third of March, the anniversary of King James’s coronation.

“My sweete boyes,” the King wrote, on the

following day, “God bless you both, and reward you for the comfortable news I resaived from you yesterday¹ (quhiche was my coronation daye), in place of a tilting. My shippe is readdie to make saile, and onlie stayes for a faire winde; God send it her! But I have, for the honour of Englande, curtailed the traine that goes by sea of a number of raskalls.”²

There was, meantime, much difficulty, from the inefficient state of the navy, in furnishing even a small fleet to fetch home the heir-apparent. Not only ships, but mariners, were wanting; the sailors had gone away, and hidden themselves. In vain were two proclamations issued to call them home; for proclamations and commissions had become so frequent that no one attended to their purport. At length, on the twenty-eighth of June, a small fleet of ten or twelve ships was equipped, and appeared in the Downs, ready to depart; but the expense of supporting them, which exceeded three hundred pounds a day, was loudly complained of by those at the head of affairs.

The King, meantime, was harassed with debts, and disturbed by apprehensions. He begged “his babie” to be as sparing as possible, since his agents had great difficulty in raising the five thou-

¹ Referring to a former letter, dated the 10th of March.

² Nichols, vol. iv., p. 839.

sand pounds required for his use. The Prince's "tilting stuff" was to come to three thousand pounds more, and those employed to get that sum knew not how to procure it. "God knows," wrote the King, "how my coffers are alreadie drained." He could think of no remedy, he added, except to obtain in advance the payment of the hundred and fifty thousand pounds promised as the Infanta's dower, which he thought "his sweete gossepe, that is now turned Spaniarde, with his golden keye,"³ would be able to get, and then he should have a fine ship speedily to bring him home to his "deare dade."

The tender father was too full of fears lest his "babie" should be hurt in tilting. He also begged of his "sweete boyes to keep themselfs in use of dawincing privatlie, though they showlde quhaff-sell and sing one to another, like Gakke (Jack) and Tom, for faulfe of bettir musike."

Finally, James desired them, even should the dispensation not arrive, to press the Prince's suit bravely, and to get him married without it, since numbers of "Catholic Romans and Protestants married in the worlde without the Pope's dispensation," as he had been informed by the Austrian ambassador.

³ Referring to the key presented to the Duke by the King of Spain.

Meantime, the university of Oxford was vying with the metropolis in demonstrations of joy for the Prince's safe arrival in Spain. In the beautiful church of St. Mary's, now chiefly appropriated to deep theological discourses, a sermon was preached in honour of that event, and an oration to the same effect delivered in the schools.⁴ Yet, even now, the feeling of the country began to appear. It was rumoured, and only too truly, that things were not going well in Spain; whilst the enormous sums of money taken out of the treasury and regalia in jewels excited general indignation. As everything familiar, as well as important, became, in those times, the theme of preachers, even from pulpits, the draining of the kingdom of money was blamed. Dr. Everard, the rector of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, was committed for "saying too much;" and another preacher was, in the midst of his unpleasant strictures on the same subject, "sung down with a psalm before he had half done his sermon."

On the twenty-sixth of May, the Earl of Rutland, Buckingham's father-in-law, received James's private instructions to have the "ships sweet, and well provided with victuals, to chuse good captains, and to defer to the authority of Buckingham as Lord Admiral, should he come on board; to avoid

⁴ State Papers, vol. cxi., No. 13.

GEORGE VILLIERS.

quarrels, which the King thought very dangerous when persons were crowded together on ship-board;—in going, to make for the Groyne, in returning to land at Southampton,⁵ the high-ways of which were even then being repaired for the reception and convenience of the expected bride. Yet still the fleet was unaccountably detained in port, and nothing was really done.

The Court, at this time, was gratified by a letter from Lady Kensington, commending the resistance of the Prince and Duke to proposals made by the Spanish Court, derogatory to them; and stating, after extravagant encomiums on the newly-made Duke, that Buckingham “shed tears” on account of his absence from the King.⁶ Complaints, however, were made at home, not only of the export of so many valuables to Spain, but of the expense of supporting the table of the Spanish ambassador, who was treated here as a guest, during Charles’s sojourn in Spain. Eighty pounds a day was the charge to which the ambassador’s table at first amounted. His repasts were eventually cut down to thirty dishes—all that King James permitted himself to display on his own table—and the cost was thus reduced to twenty pounds daily.⁷

⁵ State Papers, vol. cxvi., No. 28.

• Ibid, No. 39.

• Ibid, No. 49.

Reports, indeed, came to console the anxious minds at home, stating that the Prince and Duke were “royally treated,” but it was soon surmised that Charles was becoming weary of his detention. June had arrived; the Duke of Richmond, and six other noblemen, as commissioners, had already gone to Southampton to prepare a reception, with pageants, for the Prince; yet still Lord Rochford, who was expected to arrive with news of the wedding-day being fixed, did not make his appearance.

The Duke of Richmond was accompanied to Southampton by *Inigo Jones* and old *Alleyn*, the player, who were to employ their talents for the occasion; but who could, as the great news-teller writer of that period, *Chamberlain*, observes, “have done just as well without so many Privy Counsellors;” “but we must,” he adds, “shew our obsequiousness in all that concerns her” (the *Infanta*). At Gravesend, Lord Kelly, in the King’s barge, went to meet the new Spanish ambassador, the *Marquis Inojosa*, to whom cloths of estate, an honour never permitted to ambassadors in Queen Elizabeth’s time, were conceded, and when the haughty grandee landed at Dover, and was saluted with shot from the castle, he vouchsafed a nod from his coach, but, Spaniard-like, gave not one penny of money.⁸

⁸ *State Papers*, vol. cxlvii., No. 40.

In spite of all the journeyings to and from Spain, nothing was done, whilst the Prince, whose firmness met with the highest commendations, was written to by the Pope, and “ nibbed at with orations by the English seminaries in Spain, in order to effect his conversion.” The expenses at home and abroad could now only be supported by extraordinary devices, such as knighting a thousand gentlemen at a hundred pounds a-piece; ten or twelve serjeants-at-law at five hundred pounds a-piece; but the fees arising from the elevation of these luminaries were to be given to the Lord Keeper or to Sir Francis Crane, to further his tapestry works at Mortlake, or to pay off some scores owed him by Buckingham.⁹

Whilst all these minor difficulties were harassing the King at home, Charles was beset with a far greater difficulty. When the Puritans were blaming him for answering in a polite and conciliatory tone the Pope’s letters, without the permission of his royal father, he was displaying the firmness which could only be the result of a careful and learned education; for faith in those times was, as in ours, feeble without sound knowledge; and it was requisite for him to repel zealous efforts to convert him at all convenient times. Between the dazzling scenes of splendid shows

⁹ State Papers, vol. cxlvii., No. 80.

and diversions, made at such times and intervals of repose, Olivares was attacking the Prince with the argument best suited to the character of the romantic youth, telling him how sure a way to the Infanta's heart his conversion would be ; and by hinting that difference of creed could not but be a great obstacle to their union. And when answered that such an apostasy would raise a rebellion in Protestant England, the embarrassed but steadfast Prince was assured that if such were the case, he should have an army from Spain to quell such an insurrection. Even Lord Bristol, who was a great friend and favourite of Charles's, "strove, with a gentle hand, to allure him that way," by the specious argument that none but Roman Catholic monarchs had ever been great as sovereigns ; whilst the Pope, encouraged by all this subtle working of a hidden machinery, wrote a letter to the Bishop of Conchen, Inquisitor-General of Spain, desiring him not to let such an opportunity of conversion slip out of his hands.¹⁰

Buckingham did not, it appears, escape the zeal of the Jesuits, but acquitted himself, in reply to the energetic attacks upon his faith, with a prompt decision ; and, as far as he was concerned, the attempt seems to have ceased, although he

¹⁰ Kennet's History of England, vol. ii., p. 765.

was afterwards incessantly reproached with a leaning to Romanism.

Like others, Buckingham became, at length, weary of the subject of the Palatinate, and not only still more weary of his long residence in Spain, but anxious to leave the political management of the affairs to those who best understood those intricate matters.¹¹ To his precipitate conduct, and his impatience of delay, it was said the whole failure might be ascribed; and that, had it not been for his impetuous temper, Charles and the Infanta would have been married before the Christmas of 1623.

Whilst all went smooth, or appeared to do so, with the treaty, the diplomatists were at variance among themselves.

“When we were here in the heighth of discontents,” wrote Simon Digby,¹² “nothing so much spoken of as the Prince, his sudden departure, *reinfectâ*, all our wranglings and disputes were, when no man suspected and expected any such matter,¹³ shut up like a comedy, and the match declared and published for concluded.”

At home, the Marquis Inojosa was making

¹¹ Letter from Madrid, August, 1623.

¹² A cousin of the Earl of Bristol's.

¹³ Letter from Simon Digby. State Papers for 1623, July 25.

representations which he was ordered to lay before the King, through Don Carlos Colonna, complaining of the East India Company's ships at the taking of Ormus. In the ship called the *London*, were, it was alleged, goods stolen from the King of Spain to the amount of five hundred thousand pounds. The very dishes used by the lowest men in that ship were of silver, taken from some of the very best families in Portugal, whom the English had plundered and slain, and had then stamped their plate with their own arms. Jewels of inestimable value had also been seized. It was therefore demanded that these ships should be put into sequestration. It is a curious proof how completely a feeling against the Spanish marriage had, by this time, possessed every class, that, upon the arrival of these vessels in port, the crews, hearing a report that the marriage with the Infanta was to be broken off, shot off their artillery, and threw their caps into the sea for joy.¹⁴

Whilst the wooer, as the Prince was still styled, was murmuring at delays and obstacles, others less lofty were sending complaints to England, coupled with assurances of conjugal fidelity, which were more suspicious than satisfactory. Amongst Buckingham's most confidential

¹⁴ Letter from Madrid, State Papers, August 21, 1623.

servants was Endymion Porter, who generally acted as his interpreter. Porter, according to Arthur Wilson, "had been bred up in Spain when he was a boy, and had the language, but found no other fortune there than brought him to be Mr. Edward Villiers's man in Fleet Street, before either his master or the Marquis was acceptable at Whitehall." "It is not intended," adds the historian, "to vilify the persons, being men (in this world's lottery) as capable of advancement as others; but to shew in how poor a bark the King ventured the right freight his son, having only the Marquis to steer his course."

It was, indeed, remarkable that the agents most employed in the Duke's service were men who had raised themselves from all but menial stations. Sir Robert Graham, whose name so often occurs in the correspondence of this period, was "an underling of low degree" in Buckingham's stable. Cottington was originally a clerk to Sir Charles's Cornwallis's secretary, when Cornwallis was ambassador in Spain. The letters of Endymion Porter, also raised from mediocrity, are very characteristic of the confidential servant of a great man, who, like himself, was of easy principles. Among expressions of affection and grief for absence from his wife, Olive,

and allusions to their little son George, are mingled a protestation that Endymion did not kiss the inn-keeper's daughter at Boulogne. "Alas ! alas ! sweet Olive !" thus he writes, "why should you go about to afflict me ? Know that I live like a dying man, and as one that cannot live long without you. My eyes grow weary in looking upon anything, as wanting that rest they take in thy company and sight of thee.

"We live very honest, and think of nothing but our wives. I thought to have sent you a token of some value, but find my purse and my goodwill could not agree, and considering that my letter would be welcome to you, I leave to do it only this ring, which I hope you will esteem, if it be not for love, I think for charity. The conceit is that it seems two as you turn it, and 'tis but one.

"Sweet Olive ! remember what it is to be sad, and forget not home. In our poverty, we will live as richly as they that have the greatest plenty, and bread with thy company shall please me better than the greatest dainties in the world without it."¹⁵

Olive Porter was, it seems, a humble relation of the Duchess of Buckingham, who addresses her as "Cousin," and who appears, by

¹⁵ State Papers, May 28, 1623.

Endymion's letters, to have provided for Mistress Porter, since, in one of his singular epistles, after hoping that there may be nothing more said of any unkindness between them, Endymion sends his wife a jewel worth some hundred pounds, telling her that "she might pawn it if she had no more credit, but that Lady Buckingham had promised to supply her wants." Certain conduct of Mrs. Porter's prompts jealousy, and Endymion hints that, in his absence, "his wife has been merry with other young men," a charge which not even the most scandalous could adduce against the pensive and irreproachable Duchess of Buckingham.

It was the lot of Endymion Porter to accompany Prince Charles on a very interesting occasion; in the month of July, whilst the dispensation was daily expected, Charles grew weary of the uniform Court gaieties, during which he saw nothing but the Infanta, on whom his eyes were incessantly fastened, as the inquisitive courtiers remarked.

"I have seen," James Howell wrote from Madrid to Captain Porter, the brother of Endymion, "the Prince have his eyes immovably fixed upon the Infanta half an hour together, in a thoughtful, speculative posture, which sure would needs be tedious, if affection did not succeed it."

Lord Bristol, not very elegantly, remarked that Charles “watched her as a cat does a mouse.” Still the royal pair were not allowed to be on the terms of lovers; and the possibility, even at this last stage, of the treaty never being concluded, kept these young persons apart. Nothing could exceed the magnificence and courtly hospitality continually shown to the “wooer;” everything was done to satisfy the Prince and his suite. Nevertheless, whilst King Philip’s own servants waited upon the royal guest at the palace, there were some among the English “who did jeer at the Spanish fare, and use other slighting speeches and demeanour,” which, of course, were reported, and occasioned ill will. Once a week comedians came to the palace where the Prince was lodged, and Charles, seated, with Don Carlos, on the right hand of the Queen, the Infanta being in the middle, between her brother and his consort, taking the chief place as Prince of England, feasted his eyes upon that fair but soon forgotten face. The youthful King Philip was then under twenty, and his brother, Don Fernando, a boy of twelve, nevertheless Archbishop of Toledo and a Cardinal, was of all this royal family the only one who had the true Spanish complexion; and seems to have been, on that account, more beloved by the people, who were

often heard to sigh and say :—“Oh, when shall we have a king again of our own colour ?”

Marked out thus for popularity by the true Spanish type, Don Carlos was endowed with no office, dignity, nor title; he was only the King’s “individual companion, dressed in similar garments, from top to toe,” with the King, and when the King had new robes, others were always provided for him; he was, in short, His Spanish Majesty’s shadow.¹⁶

Thus fenced round with guardians and etiquette, the Infanta could only publicly converse with Charles, and that through an interpreter, the Earl of Bristol, “Our cousin, Archy” (King James’s fool) “hath,” says the writer in Howell’s letters, “more privilege than any, for he goes with his fool’s coat where the Infanta is with her meninas and maidens of honour, and keeps a blowing and a blustering, and flirts out what he lists. One day they were discoursing what a marvellous thing it was that the Duke of Bavaria, with less than 15,000 men, after a long toylsome march, should dare to encounter the Palsgower’s army, consisting of about 25,000, and give them an utter discomfiture, and take Prague presently after; wherefore he archly answered, that he would tell them a stranger thing than that.

¹⁶ Epistole Hoelianæ.

‘Was it not a stranger thing,’ quoth he, ‘that in the year eighty-eight, there should come a fleet of one hundred and forty sails from Spain to invade England, and that ten of these should not go back to tell what became of the rest.’”¹⁷

At last Charles was resolved to gain a private interview with her whom he supposed to be his destined wife. Understanding that the Infanta was in the habit of going early in the morning to the Caso del Campo, on the other side of the river, to gather May-dew, he rose early, and went thither, accompanied by Endymion Porter. “They were,” says Howell, “let into the house, and into the garden, but the Infanta was in the orchard, and there being a high partition wall between, and the door doubly bolted, the Prince got on the top of the wall, and sprung down a great height, and so made towards her; but she, spying him first of all the rest, gave a shriek, and ran back. The old Marquis that was then her guardian, came towards the Prince and fell on his knees, conjuring him to retire, in regard he hazarded his head if he admitted him to her company; so the door was opened, and he came out under that wall under which he had got in.”

Often did the Prince watch “a long hour toge-

¹⁷ *Epistola Hoeliana.*

ther," in a close coach in an open street, to see the Infanta, as she went abroad; and this conduct appears to have been either the curiosity felt by a young man who earnestly desires to love the individual chosen to be his wife, or a gallantry natural to the age, and then the fashion in both nations, for Charles soon either forgot the Infanta, or became indifferent to the marriage. His affections were destined to rest ultimately upon one of a very different character, as far as we can gather from the perhaps too flattering accounts given by historians of the Infanta, to that of the Spanish Princess.

Still, both the Prince and Buckingham sent encouraging accounts of the progress of the treaty, and even inspired the poor King with a hope that they should bring the Infanta over to England at Michaelmas. This was almost the last letter in which such expectations were held out: it was dated on the fifteenth of July. On that very day, the Archbishop Laud stated in his diary of a violent and destructive tempest, which many, says Camden, "took occasion to interpret as an ill-omen, but God forbid." It was a "very fair day," the Archbishop records, "till towards five at night; then great extremity of thunder and lightning, and much hurt done; the lanthorn at St. James's House blasted, the vane heading the Prince's arms beaten to pieces."

The Prince was then in Spain. It was Tuesday, and St. James's day (N.S.)¹⁸

It appears, however, from Mr. Chamberlain's letters,¹⁹ that although "Spanish tidings" were kept "very close," the Prince had even then written to the Duke of Richmond to procure him the King's permission to return home, as he was anxious to leave Spain.²⁰ About the same time a letter from Endymion Porter, dated July twelfth, to his wife Olive, intimated that the Prince was to be contracted in three weeks, but the Infanta, than whom, he added, there never was a better creature, was to follow in the following March.²¹

Meantime the articles of agreement for the marriage were read publicly by Secretary Calvert at Court, when the King of Spain swore to observe them. The Infanta was to have an Archbishop and twenty-four priests in her suite, and a chapel for her Spanish household, but no English were to attend it. She was to be allowed the training of her children only until they were ten years old. The Prince and Infanta were to sign the contract of marriage on St. James's day; that day which Laud had noted in his Diary as one of storms and destruction.²² At the same time that

¹⁸ Nichols, vol. iii., p. 227.

¹⁹ Dated July 12.

²⁰ State Papers, vol. cxlviii., No. 12.

²¹ Ibid, No. 125.

²² Ibid, vol. clix., No. 30.

a Romanist Archbishop and twenty-four priests were to be admitted into the very heart of the Court, three Jesuits were imprisoned at Dover for bringing over pictures and books; a subject of the British crown was prosecuted in the Ecclesiastical court for not standing up at the creed, or kneeling down at the Lord's Prayer, in church; and a poor woman, passing over from Calais, was brought up before the Commissioners of Passage for having beads, which, she said, were bought to make bracelets, and Popish books in her possession,²³ which, she asserted, were for the use of the Spanish ambassador.

When the articles of the Spanish match were read at the English Court, then at Theobald's, it was the Scottish lords who "stuck most" on points of religion, but they were silenced by being told that there "must be no disputing, the Prince being in the hands of the Spaniards, and the restoration of the King's children to be effected either by them or by a war which would set all Christendom by the ears." Then the articles were sworn to. The Archbishop of Spalato's Jesuit confessor put on his hat whilst the prayer for King James was being read. There was afterwards a "gay and plentiful banquet;" but the Court had become very "rude," as Secretary Conway

²³ State Papers, vol. xlix., Nos. 20 and 22.

wrote to Sir George Goring, “for want of its ornaments, which are in Spain; and but for the Earl of Carlisle, wearing of ruffs and gartering of silk stockings would be forgotten.”

King James now began to be painfully eager for the fleet, which was to fetch back his son and the Duke, to sail. “No impediment in the power of man,” he decreed, should detain it. Every letter written by his Secretaries of State to Lord Middlesex was to end with, “His Majesty cries, haste away the ships, as you tender the life of himself and his son.” Good tidings still arrived from Madrid; more liberty of communication between the Prince and the Infanta was allowed; but the contract, fixed for St. James’s Day, was not fulfilled, and the ill-omen was, in the minds of the superstitious, confirmed.²⁴

Meantime, whilst such was the state of things at the Spanish Court, their ambassadors here were in vain endeavouring to obtain indulgence for recusants. Whilst these conflicting interests were thus impeding a speedy settlement of the Spanish match, Buckingham had other reasons, besides weariness of foreign life, to induce him to wish to return home. His affairs were greatly involved, and he found it, indeed, necessary, at this time, to employ several of his friends, among

²⁴ State Papers, vol. xlix., No. 69.

whom was Sir John Suckling, to examine into them. Their answers were far from satisfactory. His revenue, they stated in reply, from land, offices, &c., was 15,213*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* a year. His expenditure was 14,700*l.* Out of this, 3,000*l.* was allowed to the Duchess for house-keeping, 2,000*l.* was allowed to his mother, the Countess of Buckingham; the costly diversion of tilting cost 1,000*l.* a year, about as much as a yacht in modern times. Then his friends gave him no very pleasant intelligence about his debts; they had amounted, when the Duke went to Spain, to 24,000*l.*, and were now increased by 29,400*l.*—money having been advanced to him whilst shining at the Court of Madrid. His friends had cleared off 17,300*l.* by selling land, and were to apply 2,500*l.* to be paid from his Irish revenues, and they now proposed similar means of discharging the remainder, which, they said, would otherwise ruin his estate. His income, they gravely told him, but little exceeded his expenditure; whereas, those who wish to leave a patrimony behind them do not spend more than two-thirds of their income²⁵—an excellent rule, but not much better observed in those days than in ours. Half the nobility appear to have been deeply involved in

²⁵ State Papers, vol. cxlii., No. 91.

debt, and hence their tendency to corrupt practices. Even the honest-hearted Sir Edward Coke was, we are told, "half-crazied" by his debts, which amounted to 26,000*l.*²⁶ In consequence, it may be presumed, of these embarrassments, the King, at this time, wrote to his "sweete Steenie," announcing a present to him of 2,000*l.* from the East India Company by way of consolation.²⁷

The Duke was also made now fully aware of the responsibility he had incurred in taking the Prince to Spain. Reports were often circulated that he had been made a prisoner there. Shortly afterwards James, being agitated with this fear, was assured that, "if there be trust on earth," the Prince and Infanta were to be moving home on the twenty-eighth of August.

The King, meantime, wrote plaintively to his "sweete boyes." He kept what he called the "feaste," on the anniversary of the Gowry plot, at Salisbury, on the fifth of August, where the Spanish ambassador and all the *corps diplomatique* were conveyed, at the King's expense, in coaches, which cost twenty pounds a day ; and here, besides a brace of bucks and a stag every day, the provision made for these Spanish grandees was so

²⁶ Nichols, p. 887.

²⁷ Ibid, p. 887; from Birch's MSS., Brit. Museum, 4174.

plentiful that, not being able to use it, they were stated to have buried it under dunghills, rather than bestow it upon heretics. "And though," says Mr. Chamberlain, referring to this report, "I took it for a scandal or slander, yet I have heard it verified more than once; and that the neighbours were forced to complain, though to little purpose, for, I know not how, the Spaniard hath got such a hand everywhere, that he carries more away, when he comes, than all other ambassadors together."²⁸

Buckingham, we are told, "lay at home under a million of maledictions."²⁹ The poor King, indifferent to public opinion, and now visibly declining in health, was nevertheless constantly writing to Madrid in such terms as these:—"If ye haisten not hoame, I apprehende I shale never see you, for my longing will kill mee." To the Prince individually, he expressed himself in terms which left Charles no alternative but to return. "The neces-

²⁸ It seems that this expensive allowance to the ambassadors was suffered to go on till after the 14th of August, when Secretary Conway wrote to Secretary Calvert to complain that it had not then been discontinued, and that the delay in doing so put the King out of all patience, fearing that the letters written on the subject were lost. The post, Conway remarks, travels slowly, taking ten hours from London to Staines. He recommends reformation therein.—State Papers, vol. cl., No. 98.

²⁹ Sir H. Wotton, p. 218.

sitie of my affaires," the King wrote, "enforced me to tell you that ye must preferre the obedience to a father to the love ye carrie to a mistresse." Eager to do away with every possible impediment to the marriage, the King, on the seventh of August, signed, whilst at Salisbury, the "declaration, touching the pardons, suspensions, and dispensations of the Roman Catholics."³⁰

The Prince had, it appears, at this very time, "been packed up," and ready to depart, leaving matters to be arranged afterwards. Yet the Spanish ambassadors at home expressed themselves contented, and ready to fulfil all promises. Sir Edward Herbert, speaking to the Marquis Inojosa, of a report in France that the Prince was detained a prisoner in Spain, received an answer that it was the Prince whose virtues had captivated the King of Spain;³¹ and for some time compliments and assurances continued to be exchanged.

On the twenty-first of August, the King visited the ships which were to go to Spain, under the command of the Earl of Rutland, who was unfortunately absent, upon the earnest entreaty of his daughter, the Duchess of Buckingham, and of his grandchild, Lady Mary, that he would remain

³⁰ Nichols, p. 888.

³¹ State Papers, cxlii., No. 107.

with them. At the end of that month, nevertheless, the fleet was still detained for fifteen days, in the vain hope of receiving news of the Prince's marriage. The Pope's illness, it was now said, was delaying the dispensation; but Buckingham's conduct was, according to a letter from Sir Francis Woolley to Carleton, "much commended." He was, nevertheless, more impatient than ever to return, and that eagerness was sure, it was thought, to hinder rather than accelerate the wished-for nuptials. In addition to his other troubles, Buckingham had now a very grievous one in the visitation which had fallen, during his absence, upon Lord Purbeck, his favourite brother, who became insane. As usual, under every circumstance, the greatest good sense was shown by the Duchess of Buckingham. She wrote to Secretary Conway to inform him that the unfortunate Viscount's "distemper now inclined to his usual melancholy fit," during which he was gentle, and "could be removed anywhere, but that at present he would be outrageous were it attempted;" she suggests, therefore, that Sir John Keysley, and a few other friends, had better remain with him in London.

The King, replying through his secretary, said that he admired the Duchess's gentleness, but that Purbeck's malady, exciting him to public

acts, in public places, which dishonoured himself and his brothers, made it necessary to place him under some restraint, and to remove him into the country.³² Lord Purbeck, it seems, was therefore put under restraint. Such was the end of that ambitious career which the Duke had hoped to witness, and so pave the way to which he had promoted the marriage with Sir Edward Coke's unhappy daughter.

Whilst a degree of gloom and anxiety thus overspread his home, Buckingham was witnessing, in the festivities given to honour the expected espousals, one of the most characteristic diversions of the Spanish nation. This was the “Fuego de Caunas,”—borrowed from the Moors, and still practised by Eastern nations, under the name of El Djerid. “It is,” says Sir Walter Scott, “a sort of rehearsal of the encounter of their light horsemen, armed with darts, as the Tourney represented the charge of the feudal cavaliers with their lances. In both cases, the difference between sport and reality only consisted in the weapons being sharp or pointless.”³³

This entertainment was ordered by the King of Spain, who was not contented with the festivities hitherto given in honour of the Prince of

³² State Papers, vol. cli., Nos. 86, 87.

³³ Somers's Tracts, vol. ii., p. 352.

Wales, and was held at Madrid, in the Market Place, containing scaffolding for a great concourse of strangers, who were present. The Infanta appeared on this occasion in white, as an unspotted dove, "after the Majesty of England;" the manes of her coach horses were twisted with blue ribbands, in compliment to her future consort; and there accompanied the Lady Infanta, says the Spanish annalist, "Don Fernando, her brother, clothed in Romane purple, that radiant sunne of the church, even as his sister is the resplendent beames of true beauty,"³⁴ this "radiant sunne of the church;" being, as it has been before stated, a boy of twelve years of age. The Queen was carried in a chair of state, followed by her meninas (or minions) and ladies. The King, about two o'clock, arrived in a coach with the Prince of Wales, and his brothers, "brave with gravity," says the chronicler, and "grave in bravery." Philip was in black, Prince Charles in white, their dresses divided in fashion, half after the English, and half after the Spanish manner; Charles being placed on the right hand of the King.

Then came four and twenty movable fountains,

³⁴ A Relation of the Royal Festivities and Fuego Canad. By Don Antonio de la Penna, from a translation in the British Museum.—Nichols, p. 889.

with a supply of beverages ; and next entered into the Market Place His Majesty's four and twenty musicians, and servants in satin liveries, carnation colour, guarded with silver lace, interspersed with folds of black velvet in large cassocks, with black hats and carnation plumes, mounted on goodly horses. Next appeared the King's equerries, leading the way, uncovered, before a noble courser on which His Majesty was to run : and, amongst the numerous retinue that followed, were four farriers with pouches of crimson velvet, in which all that was requisite for shoeing horses was contained. Sixty horses of brown bay, in white and black trappings, with muzzles of silver, and covered with crimson velvet, embroidered with the arms of Philip IV., were led by lacqueys in carnation satin, their hose and jacket decorated with black and silver lace. Next came forty "youngsters of the stables," dressed in the Turkish fashion, and lastly, twelve mules, laden with bunches of canes, and caparisoned in similar fashion with the horses. To add to the convenience of the equestrians, steps of fine wood, inlaid with ebony, and covered with carnation taffeta, with fringes of gold, were also brought into the Market Place.

The livery of the town was of orange colour, relieved with silver ; and it may easily be con-

ceived how splendid was the effect of these gorgeous dresses, set off by the badges worked in silver, beneath a cloudless sky, with the far-famed Spanish coursers prancing under their gorgeous caparisons, and all the beauty and rank of the city ranged as beholders. Mingled with these retainers, were those of the great Spanish grandees. First came Don Duarte, the Duke of Infantado, with forty horses, in white and black caparisons, with the glorious blazon of the Ave Maria upon them; and after the last horse, came the Rider, as he was called on this occasion.

Next followed Don Pedro of Toledo, the pride of Castilian knights, with a troop of sorrel horses. Next, that of the Admiral of Castile, whose retainers wore long coats of black satin, and yellow and white plumes, and were followed by the farrier—a functionary attached to each troop. Presently, the Condé de Monterey, the Duke of Sessa and the Duke of Cea's horse, all in liveries of various colours, made up the number of five hundred and eighty-six cavaliers; augmented by muleteers, farriers, and grooms, in number a hundred and forty-four. This unrivalled troop, glittering with silver plumes and emblazonments, took an hour to make their entrance. After

“ baiting but a few bulls,” says the chronicler, the running with the canes commenced.

King Philip, followed by his thaclow, Don Carlos, then went to mask himself for the sport, at the house of the Condessa Miranda, who had been previously apprised of the intended honour. Her reception of the young monarch is characteristic of the minute, though stately, hospitality of that period. She whitened her house all over for the occasion ; she hung round the courts with draperies ; in the portals of the King’s apartment these were of white damask, with gold fringe. Beds were prepared for the King and Infant Carlos ; and these were brought from the royal palace ; the rooms were washed with sweet powder and water mingled with ambar, and were replete with fragrance. Next to the apartment of His Majesty, there was one provided for the Condé Olivares, with a bed of rich needle-work. The Condessa Miranda also provided for the King and Don Carlos each a shirt to change, which they put on ; she gave each of her royal guests boxes of relics, of inestimable value : to the King, one of St. Philip the Apostle; to the Infant, one of St. Lawrence, given to the Condessa by Pope Sixtus V., when she was at Naples ; and these reliques were the more valuable because the vessel in which they had been sent was sunk, but the trunk in

which they came was seen in the water, and was sent to the Condé of Miranda, by the famous John Andrea Dorea, which miraculous incident proves, says the Spanish historian, “the certainty of reliques;” this gift was esteemed a “pious and discreet present, on such occasions, to such persons.” The Condessa had also gloves and handkerchiefs, for her royal guests, in cabinets of rock crystal, set in gold; sweet cake to be eaten, in crystal glasses; and crystal apples, filled with sweet waters. All these carefully arranged courtesies must have seemed indeed singular to Prince Charles and Buckingham, when they, who had come from a Court in which people had almost begun to show outward disrespect to the King, by leaving off ruffs and plumes, witnessed these refinements of hospitality.

More than all, it must have astonished them, considering the festive nature of the occasion, had they not been accustomed now to Spanish modes, that the Condessa, being most “wise and discreet,” had procured that the Holy Sacrament, in the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, should be exhibited before her window, with great solemnity of lights and ornaments. On bended knees, the two young Princes humbly and devoutly worshipped the sacred elements,

previous to returning to their apartments to put on their masks. In that room they found about forty plates of silver, with all manner of conserves on them, and rose-sugar confec-tions. The honour shown to the Condessa in thus selecting her to be the hostess, was, it was alleged, only a renewal of the favour exhibited by Philip the Second, the grandfather of the King, to that illustrious lady when she was vice-Queen of Barcelona.

After this preparation, the running commenced. The canes were distributed to each runner, and, according to ancient custom, the King chose the Condé Olivares for his own encounter, and the Infant Carlos, the Marquis of Carpio. The palm of skill and bravery was, of course, accorded to these royal brothers, and on the Duke of Cea's delivering to the King the canes, the place rang with shouts of "Long live their Majesties," a cry which London doubtless would re-echo as this "triumphant show," says the annalist, "was made to honour her Prince, and in a time of such vehement heate, though now it was qualified."³⁵

This grand festivity was probably the cause of a serious illness to Buckingham, for, a day afterwards, Charles wrote to his father that his "dog" was not to be troubled with writing, having taken

³⁵ Nichols, 901.

cold, which had ended in an ague. The Duke had been bled, and was recovered; the Prince concluded by warning the King that in spite of his efforts to keep his letters private, they had been seen in London, by the French ambassador's means, by the Spanish ambassador, and that His Majesty was “betrayed in his bedchamber.”

Buckingham added in a postscript:—“Sir,—I have bine the willinger to let your sone play the secretary at this time of little neade, that you may see the extraordinary care he hath of me, for which I will not intreat you not to love him the wors—nor him that threatens you that when he once getts hould of your bed-post againe never to quitt it.”

The period for Charles's return home with the Princess was now at hand.³⁶ It was arranged with the King of Spain that, upon the arrival of the Pope's approbation of some articles that had lately been sent to him, he should be empowered to have the Infanta married by proxy; and that, meantime, she should be styled “Princessa de Inglatierra,” and be considered in every respect as the betrothed wife of Prince Charles. “This day we take our leaves,” the Prince, on the twenty-fifth of August, wrote to his father; his letter was accompanied by one from the Earl of Bristol, stating

* Nichols, 903.

that the King of Spain and his ministers had grown “to have so high a dislike of the Duke of Buckingham,” and considered him to be so adverse to the treaty, and to exercise so great an influence over Prince Charles, that they hoped it might not be in his power to make the Infanta’s life less happy there (in England), or to embroil the two kingdoms. “Suspicious and distastes betwixt them here and my Lord of Buckingham,” Bristol said, “could not be at a greater height.” This was the first letter that Bristol wrote prejudicial to Buckingham.

Nevertheless, at the very same moment, the Duke wrote to his master thus:—“Sir,—Ile bring all things with me you have desired, except the Infanta, which hath almost broken my heart, because yours, your sone’s, and the nation’s honour is touched by the miss of it; but since it’s there falt (their fault) here, and not ours, wee will bere it the better; and when I shall have the happiness to lie at your feete, you shall then knowe the truth of it, and no more.”³⁷

In another letter from Bristol, James was given to understand that the compact entered into by his son was a solemn and formal promise; but that an afterthought impelled him to make the powers with which he had entrusted Bristol contingent:

³⁷ Nichols, 905.

“May it please your Majesty,

“By my cosen, Simon Digby, I gave your Majesty an account of all that passed here upon the Prince his departure, and that according to what was capitulated. His Highness had left powers for the marrying of the Infanta, *per verba de presenti*, which powers were made unto the King and his brother, Don Carlos, but left with me to be delivered upon the arrival of the Pope’s approbation, and so declared to be His Highnesse’ pleasure before all this King’s Ministers that were present at the solemne act of passing the Prince his powers unto the King. Since His Highnesse’ departure, I have receaved commandement from His Highness not to make deliverie of the said powers untill His Highness shall be satisfied what securitie may be given him that the Infanta may not become a religious woman²⁸ after the betroathing; and that I expect his further pleasure therein, as y^r Majestie will see by the coppie of His Highnesse’ letter unto me, which I presume to send your Majestie, as likewise the answer which in that point I make unto His Highnesse, to the end your Majestie may have perfect information of the whole estate of the businesse. For that I conceave the temporal articles are so farr agreed that I have to give your Majestie an account of

* A professed nun.

them within a few daies, and to youre content, and the businesse, after so manie rubbs, brought to that estate that I am confident there will not be any failing in any pointe capitulated betwixt your Majesty and His Highnesse, but all will be punctuallie performed. I conceave your Majestie, continuing your desire of the match, would be loath to have the faire way it is now in to be clogged or interrupted with any new jealousie that may now be raised, for questionlesse there is no securtie in that particular, that can on His Highnesse' part be required, that they will refuse him.”³⁹

The character of Charles, composed, as Hume remarks, “of decency, reserve, modesty, sobriety, virtues so agreeable to the manners of the Spaniards;”⁴⁰ the reliance he had placed on their honour, his romantic gallantry, the invariable courtesy of his demeanour to every person, whether prince, or peer, or the lowest groom of his household; a courtesy springing from a gentle nature, elevated and refined by careful culture; these attributes were strongly contrasted with the impetuous temper of Buckingham. There are moments when sincerity becomes insolence; and when Buckingham, at his last

“ State Papers, 1628. Foreign.

“ Confirmed by State Papers, vol. cliii., No. 44.

interview with Olivares, told him that his attachment to the Spanish nation, and to the King, was extreme, and that he should use every endeavour in his power to cement the friendship between England and Spain, but that, as for him, the Condé Olivares, "he need never consider him as a friend, but must ever expect from him every possible opposition and enmity," he was well reproved by the grave and lofty answer, "that Olivares very willingly accepted what was offered him." Thus they parted.⁴¹

There were, however, many who approved this defiant manner, and called the conduct of the Duke "brave and resolute;" and certainly there was much in the character of Olivares to extenuate the bitterness of Buckingham's dislike. Lord Bristol, however, imputed all the mistrust and failure that ensued to Buckingham. "The Prince," he said, "had left men's hearts set upon him." "And the leave-taking," adds the ambassador, "betwixt him and the King, was with as great profession of love and affection as could be, of which I was a witness, being interpreter betwixt them."⁴²

Every possible demonstration of honour was proffered to the Prince and Duke at their depar-

⁴¹ Hume, from Rushworth's Collections, vol i., p. 109.

⁴² Nichols, p. 913. From Haddwicke State Papers, vol. i., p. 476.

ture. To the last, the pages of the Condé Olivares attended, as they had done all along, on Buckingham—there was no apparent change of feeling, nor diminution of respect.

The farewell presents, too numerous to be fully recited, were magnificent. Among them were, given to the Prince by the King, eighteen Spanish jennets, six Barbary horses, six mares, and twenty foals. These superb animals were covered with cloths of crimson velvet, guarded with gold lace; one of them being distinguished by a saddle of fine lamb-skin, the other “furniture” being set with rich pearl; among a number of cross-bows which were given, those used by the Dukes of Medina Sidonia and Ossunia, in the wars, were peculiarly valuable to the Prince.

To Buckingham’s share, among others, were several Spanish jennets, and Barbary or Arabian horses, and a splendid diamond girdle, worth thirty thousand crowns.

The Queen presented the young Prince with linen, and skins of ambar and of kids, their scent and perfume amounting in value to many thousand crowns.

Twice, before his leaving for ever the Spanish capital, did Charles, in company with the King, visit the Infanta. She had retreated to the monastery of the Descallas, or bare-legged friars;

and it was, perhaps, her extreme piety that inspired the Prince with the fear that she might, after her betrothal, become a nun, and in that way avoid espousing a heretic. She received him with “tears of joy,” and gave the Prince many boxes of scents, flowers, and curiosities of great value. The Prince’s gifts to the Infanta consisted of a string of two hundred and fifty great pear-shaped pearls, one of them with a diamond which could not be valued, and two pairs of pearl-shaped ear-rings, marvellous great.” Amongst the officers and retainers of the Court, the Prince gave, in various ways, the sum of twelve thousand pounds.

At their last interview in Madrid, the King of Spain wore black, as a token of mourning at their departure; but the final parting was in a field near the Escurial, the place appointed for their adieu. Philip had been desirous of showing to the English that wonder of Europe, with its thirteen courts, its grand marble structure, its statue of St. Lawrence over the gate, with his gridiron in his hand. Here Philip, the Queen, the Infant, and his brothers pointed out, with just pride, the fine cloisters, three stories high, the libraries, sepulchres, chapels, and graves. About a hundred friars were resident at this time in the house, which it required half a day to go over. That part appropriated to royal residence was wholly

unsuitable to the purpose. It is a remarkable fact that, when Charles the First was in Spain, there was only one kitchen in the Escurial; neither was there a hall, nor offices below stairs fit for a royal abode; so that, as Sir Richard Wynn remarked, “it was never intended for a king’s palace, but for the goodliest monastery in the world, which it is.”⁴³

The church, with its twenty altars, and enormous silver candlesticks, higher and heavier than a man; the wonderful chapel at the extremity, with curiously painted roofs and desks of silver; the marble fountains playing in every court; the invaluable paintings in the churches and chapels, collected in all parts of the world, were then in undisturbed freshness; the convulsions of war and revolutions, and the hand of time, have since dimmed their splendour, but the Escurial stands unscathed on the side of a mountain. Stern in cloistral gloom rather than beautiful, it had then a narrow strip of garden round two sides, with walks and “knots of flowers,” and a pond at one extremity, in which the friars were accustomed to fish. Most of them had their apartments provided with a chapel; all had mules

⁴³ Narrative of the journey of the Prince’s servants into Spain; printed at the end of the Life of Richard II., by Hearne.

for riding, for walking was forbidden to these monks, even to a short distance.⁴⁴

In a field near this grand building, the King and Prince sat and conversed an hour; a pillar, it was afterwards decided, was to be erected on the spot where this last interview took place; "wherein," wrote Mr. Chamberlain, "the Duke of Buckingham is quite forgotten, as if he had been none of the company." The Queen, the Infanta, and her brothers, embraced the Prince who so soon became their foe. The English lords and gentlemen kissed the King's hands, the Spaniards those of the Prince, "returning," says the chronicler, "to embrace us again with wonderful demonstrations of love." Then the Prince took his final departure, attended by the Condé de Monterey, Gondomar, Buckingham, and Lord Bristol, and pursued his journey to Segovia, which had been recommended to him, according to Sir Richard Wynn, as the only thing worth seeing after the Escurial. "It was then," says Wynn,

"It was improved before the time of the Commonwealth, when Lady Fanshawe describes it as approached by a double row of elms, and having a large park well stored with wood and water; she speaks of seventeen courts, with gardens in each, and of a very fine palace; the walls of the building were of marble, so polished that Titian had painted them "all over." She says also that the palace is "royally furnished."—See Miss Costello's Life of Lady Fanshawe, p. 389.

“a large town, but much ruinous, having a great castle, kept in very good repair, in which there be two goodly rooms, whose roofes are the richest, done with gold, and incrusting, of an old manner, but wonderful costly.” Here Charles was welcomed with a salute of artillery, and alighting, he went over the palace, extolling the memory of Philip the Second, who had rebuilt it, and expressing great pleasure at seeing his arms quartered with the Spanish scutcheons in the great hall,—Henry the Third of Spain, having married Catherine, daughter of John of Gaunt, in right of whom Philip the Second pretended to derive his claim to the crown of England after the death of Mary. In this palace, Charles was magnificently entertained; and in the evening, whilst fireworks and torches threw their light upon the scene, the *Alcayd* of that royal house presented him with a gallant mask of thirty-two-knights, and proposed to honour him by a bull-fight on the ensuing day; but he declined the terrible amusement, being in haste to depart.

Charles—and doubtless Buckingham (although in this decline of favour in Spain, he is rarely alluded to by the chroniclers)—in stopping at Valladolid, had great delight in seeing some of the finest productions of Michael Angelo and of Raphael. Before the Prince entered the city, an

individual who was the object of dread and jealousy, and who was still more hated by Olivares than even Buckingham, was withdrawn from amid those who vied in offering their homage to the Prince. This was the Cardinal Duke of Lerma, the disgraced minister and favourite of Philip, who was ordered to leave Valladolid before Charles entered it. The affront sank deep into the old man's heart, as he had greatly wished to see the Prince. The Duke of Lerma was considered to be more favourable to the English alliance than Olivares, and he had formerly projected a union between Anne of Austria, then Infanta, and Henry, the last Prince of Wales. He lived generally at Valladolid, retiring, as was the custom with the Spaniards of rank, after sixty, to a place of quiet and devotion; officiating, and singing mass, and passing his days in charity and piety. "This," as Howell remarks, "doth not suit well with the genius of an Englishman, who loves not to pull off his clothes till he goes to bed." The remark shows that our countrymen were then, as now, the last in Europe to give up the intellectual or military career to which their youth had been devoted, and which, during their middle life, had been their source of pride and prosperity.

The conduct of Olivares to the Cardinal Duke seems to betray a rancorous spirit, which may somewhat extenuate the haughty bearing of Buckingham to the ruling favourite. Lerma's fall was signal; he had been the greatest favourite, save one, ever known in the Spanish Court; and he was, as a grandee of Spain, privileged to stand covered before the King. Had it not, however, been for his ecclesiastical dignity, which protected him, the Duke of Lerma would have sunk, under the persecutions of Olivares, into utter ruin.

Meantime, whilst the Prince was thus journeying to the coast, Sir John Finet, the assistant Master of the Ceremonies to King James, being also a naval commander, had set sail in May with certain ships, now in the port of St. Andero, in Biscay. They had been three months in their voyage from England, and Finet had been ordered to apprise the Prince of the Earl of Rutland's arrival in the same port; but that event not having taken place, he rowed ashore, and crossing several mountains in the darkness of a tempestuous night, met the Prince and Duke at about six leagues distance from the town. Charles was beside himself with joy on seeing Finet, and told him that he looked upon him "as one that had the face of an angel," for bring-

ing such good news. Buckingham, when he afterwards beheld him, was equally enraptured, and drawing from his finger a ring worth a hundred pounds, gave it to Finet.

Prince Charles arrived at St. Andero on St. Matthew's day. Whilst at dinner outside of the town, he heard that the whole fleet, under the command of the Earl of Rutland, lay at anchor near the harbour. Charles hastened to the port, and hurrying through the town amid volleys of musketry and the firing of cannon in his honour, went on board that very afternoon. The *Prince*, a vessel which was a source of great pride to the English, contained the admiral of the fleet. In returning that night in his own barge, rowed by watermen, well accustomed to the Thames, but little fitted to cope with a swelling sea, the Prince was in imminent peril. In the hurry of the moment, neither master, pilot, nor mariner of experience were sent in his barge; the town was, at least, at the distance of a Spanish league from the ships, and before the boat could near the shore, a storm arose. The Prince's watermen were, says the chroniclers, "strong, cunning, and courageous, but the furious waves taught their oares another manner of practice than ever they were put to on the Thames." They soon found it impossible to reach the town. Not only did the tempest rage, but there lay at the very mouth of

the harbour a barque, which was there for refuge, so that it was dangerous to approach it ; neither did the dismayed boatmen dare to make for the shore ; it was studded with rocks ; almost equally perilous would it have been to return to the ships, for the night was dark, and, in case of missing them, the boat, with its precious freight, might be carried out into the main seas, the channel where the fleet anchored running with an impetuous and irresistible torrent.

It was a singular and critical situation. Here was the heir to a great kingdom, close, on the one hand, to a city which was ringing with acclamations at his arrival ; on the other, near to a fleet which the most anxious precautions had sent for his service—and yet, scarcely would a peasant in his father's dominions have been placed in such a plight for want of ordinary care, or, perhaps, owing to the jealousy of the boatmen and their dislike to foreign aid.

“In this full sea of horrors,” to borrow the somewhat flowery language of the narrator, the Prince resolved to turn back towards the ships, and to fall upon the first that could be fastened on, rather than to run the risk of being wrecked on one of the rocks, which threatened immediate destruction.

The storm continued to rage, and the night be-

came darker and darker. Charles and Buckingham could, at this moment, see the lights streaming from the town, and dimly, perhaps, discern the track of the English fleet. Soon all was enveloped in the deepest gloom. At such a moment the mind can only turn to one source of help, and to that, doubtless, the young and reflective Prince, who afterwards met the sternest trials of life with a lofty resignation, did revert, whatever may have been the case with his spoiled, impetuous favourite.

“At last,” as the chronicler observes, “that Omnipotent arm, which can tear up rocks from their center, and that voyce which can call in the winds, and still them with the moving of His finger, sent a dove with an olive branch in her bill, as an assurance of comfort.”

Sir Sackwill Trevor, the commander of the *Defiance*, perceived at this crisis the peril of the Prince; by his order, casks and buoys, with lights fastened to them by some ropes, were thrown out, and the watermen seized hold of these, though at the risk of their lives. A light was now discerned in the ship *Defiance*, and the Prince was soon safely received on board, where he spent the night, by no means, as it is said, daunted by these terrors.

On the ensuing day Charles went on shore, but returned on the same evening to the fleet. On

Sunday, the fourteenth of September, he entertained Gondomar and the other grandes who had been commissioned to attend him to the coast on board the *Prince*.

The dinner consisted, according to Phineas Pette, who was in the ship, "of no other than we brought from England with us." Stalled oxen, fatted sheep, venison, and all manner of fowl were presented to those who would, perhaps, never see such a repast spread before them again. A long table for persons of inferior quality was set in the great cabin, and across this another was placed, where Charles and the chief personages sat. Healths were drunk; the Spaniards were delighted with the ships, but still more with the graceful and courteous manners of Charles. Never, it is said, had a stranger so won upon the affections of a people, as this young Prince had done in Spain, independently of his generosity and liberality at parting, when he ordered that the gifts and rewards of all those who had attended him in his journey, should be double in value to what he had before specified. "We have found some difficulty," Lord Bristol wrote to Calvert, "in taking up the monies, but I shall, God willing, see it perfectly performed to his highness's honour."⁴⁵

* Nichols, p. 923, from Haddwicke Papers, vol. i., p. 475.

Some days elapsed before the *Prince* weighed anchor. At last, on the eighteenth of September, Charles bade adieu to Spain, and with it, probably, to the sunshine of his youth. For James was now visibly declining, and his son was soon to be called upon to fulfil duties which he comprehended not in their just spirit, and to contend with bold, intelligent, indignant subjects, whom he also imperfectly understood.

As the sails were swelling with the breeze, the Prince and the other English gentlemen stood on deck taking leave, in dumb show, of the throng of Spaniards who saluted them from the shore. The wind was now prosperous, but a voyage of nine days awaited the impatient Prince before he could touch English ground.

The fleet consisted of ten ships of the line ; that styled the *Prince* was of twelve hundred tons burthen, the others considerably less. In eight days they arrived within twelve miles of the Scilly Islands. The Council who were entrusted with the convoy of Charles debated on the propriety of his landing on this remote point, and were unanimous against it. Several pilots had come on board, but were dismissed. After supper, however, Charles suddenly ordered out the long boat and the ketch, and announced his intention of landing, accompanied by Buckingham.

About one o'clock at night, they got into the long boat, and being saluted with a volley from the ship, made for St. Mary's Island, where the Prince and all his companions landed about seven in the morning. In the castle the Prince and Buckingham remained four days, and were taken again on board of the fleet on the third of October; and on the fifth of the same month, in the afternoon, arrived at Portsmouth,⁴⁶ having been in all seventeen days at sea. Charles proceeded at once to the house of Lord Annandale, near Guildford, and reached York House at eight the next morning; thus paying Buckingham the honour of going first to his house in London. Here he met the Privy Council, and refused an unreasonable request by the Spanish ambassador for a prior audience.⁴⁷

Never was there more general or more enthusiastic joy expressed than on this occasion, and, amongst other demonstrations, a bonfire, which cost a hundred pounds, was kindled at Guildhall. It is supposed to have been composed of forfeited logwood, prohibited to the dyers, which had been seized. Shops were closed; the streets were spread

⁴⁶ Nichols, p. 926, from the Diary of Phineas Pette. There were four narratives of persons who had their voyage to Spain printed—Lord Carey of Leppington, Sir Richard Wynn, Sir John Finet and Phineas Pette.

⁴⁷ State Papers, Calendar, vol. cliii., p. 44.

with tables of provisions, and with hogsheads of wine and butts of sack ; the people were mad with joy. If they met a cart full of wood, they took out the horse, and set the wood and the cart on fire. At St. Paul's a new anthem was sung, the words being taken from the 114th psalm :—“ When shall I come out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among the barbarous people ? ”

The battlements of St. Paul's Cross displayed as many burning torches as the years of the young Prince in age ; two enormous bonfires lighted up the enclosure around the cross, whilst fireworks, squibs, crackers, and rockets added to the general illumination of the city, in which, between St. Paul's and London Bridge, no fewer than a hundred and eight bonfires were kindled. But the most interesting of all the incidents of that day was the reprieve of six men and two women, whom the Prince met on their road to Tyburn, where they were being taken for execution. At Royston, the King came down on the stairs to receive the travellers. The Prince and Duke kneeled down as they beheld the infirm monarch hastening to them ; but the King fell on their necks, and they all wept together. A post was despatched to the Duchess and Countess of Buckingham, and to the Countess of Denbigh, to come to Royston.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ State Papers, vol. cliii., No. 44.

Whilst the public rejoicings in almost every town in the kingdom did honour to "England's Joy," as Charles was then called, Buckingham gleaned some good from this safe return. The confidence of the people appeared to be restored to him. There was a general impression that even before Charles had quitted Spain, the match with the Infanta was virtually at an end; and this was partially confirmed when the Spanish ambassadors, having set out towards Royston, to congratulate the Prince, were met at Buntingford by Secretary Conway, to say that Royston being "a place of ill reception," they were not to sleep there that night, but must return to Buntingford the same evening. This was by no means an agreeable intimation to the Marquis Inojosa, since it was but a week before that the French ambassador had both supped and lodged at Royston, though going unexpectedly; nevertheless, the Marquis proceeded to Royston, and had apparently a gracious reception from the King and Prince; neither did they "speak amiss" of the Duke's manner on the awkward occasion. "Welcome home!" was for a long time the burden of the Court and country. One amongst the least meritorious of Buckingham's dependants, Tobie Mathew, was knighted at Royston, where James and his favourite kept their

intentions with regard to Spain profoundly secret. Mathew owed, indeed, his very presence at Court to Buckingham, who had interceded for him when banished on account of his conversion to Popery by the Jesuit Parsons. Mathew, when at Madrid with the Duke, had written a description of the Infanta, which he styled a picture “drawn in black and whyte,” for James’s amusement. “We pray you,” Buckingham wrote to the King, “let none laugh at it but yourselfe and honneste Kate; he thinks he hath hitt the naill on the head, but you will find it the foolishest thing you ever saw.” Amongst the many impertinences of the fool, Archy, some, directed against Tobie Mathew, were so cutting as to drive the newly-made knight from the dinner-table at Royston.⁴⁹

Whilst all these matters, great and small, were discussed at Court, the poor Infanta, under the tuition of Mr. Wadsworth and Father Boniface, was studying English “apace.” Wher- ever she went, she was treated as Princess of England, the English ambassadors standing un- covered before her; whilst she occupied herself

⁴⁹ Tobie died at Ghent, in 1665, having become a Jesuit. Lord Orford has, according to Nichols, placed Tobie Mathew erroneously on the list of painters, and misled Grainger and others, owing to the reference to the Infanta’s picture above stated.—Nichols p. 931, note.

in having several embroidered suits of ambar-leather prepared for the Prince, and in the choice and arrangement of the attendants who were to accompany her to England. "We want," Howell wrote, "nothing but one more dispatch from home, and then the marriage will be solemnized, and all things consummated."⁵⁰

This was the last lingering hope, which was soon to be abandoned, and fresh schemes substituted to amuse the fancy of the Prince, to gratify the caprice of his favourite, and to divert the decline of the King.

⁵⁰ *Epistolaæ Hoelianæ.*

CHAPTER II.

1624—1625.

THE REMARKS OF SIR HENRY WOTTON UPON BUCKINGHAM'S UNINTERRUPTED PROSPERITY DURING THE REIGN OF JAMES—HIS MOST PERILOUS TIME YET TO COME—THE CHARACTER OF CHARLES DIFFICULT TO MANAGE—HIS AFFECTIONS DIVIDED—REQUEST OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL REGARDING THE LATE KING'S FUNERAL AND THE YOUNG KING'S MARRIAGE—GOOD TASTE DISPLAYED BY CHARLES IN HIS CONDUCT AT THE FUNERAL—THE INFLUENCE OF BUCKINGHAM STILL PARAMOUNT—ROGER COKE'S REMARK UPON KING JAMES'S REGRET ON OBSERVING THAT HIS SON WAS OVERRULED BY THE DUKE—THE THREE GREAT KINGDOMS OF EUROPE AT THIS PERIOD RULED BY FAVOURITES—THE MARRIAGE OF CHARLES AND HENRIETTA MARIA—MOTIVE ATTRIBUTED TO BUCKINGHAM — PRELIMINARY STEPS — LETTER FROM LORD KENSINGTON TO THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM DETAILING HIS INTERVIEW WITH THE QUEEN-MOTHER — DESCRIPTION OF THE YOUNG PRINCESS—THE DUKE PREPARES FOR HIS JOURNEY INTO FRANCE TO FETCH

HOMM THE BRIDE—THE EXPENSE OF HIS MISSION
OBJECTION TO BY THE NATION—THE TWO AMBAS-
SADORS DESCRIBED—RICH—LORD KENSINGTON, FIRST
EARL OF HOLLAND—HIS BEAUTY OF PERSON,
ADDRESS, AND EARLY FAVOUR AT THE COURT OF
JAMES—HIS RESTING SOLELY UPON BUCKINGHAM—
HIS MARRIAGE WITH THE DAUGHTER OF SIR WALTER
COME, THE OWNER OF THE MANOR OF KENSINGTON—
THE EARL OF HOLLAND REGARDED BY SOME AS A
RIVAL TO BUCKINGHAM—JAMES RELIED MORE ON
THE EARL OF CARLISLE—CHARACTER OF THE TWO
NOBLES BY BISHOP HACKET—SUCCESSFUL INTER-
VIEWS ON THE PART OF LORD HOLLAND WITH MARIE
DE MEDICE—HER DISPOSITION TO FAVOUR CHARLES
AS A SUITOR TO HER DAUGHTER—ANECDOTE OF
HENRIETTA MARIA AND OF CHARLES'S PORTRAIT—EN-
COMIUMS OF HENRIETTA—THE DUCHESS DE CHE-
VERUSE—HER INFLUENCE OVER ANNE OF AUSTRIA
—HER SPLENDOUR—RESENTMENT OF THE COUNT DE
SOISSONS ON ACCOUNT OF THE MARRIAGE TREATY
WITH ENGLAND—THE WILLINGNESS EVINCED BY
HENRIETTA MARIA TO THE MARRIAGE—LORD KEN-
SINGTON'S FLATTERY OF THE QUEEN-MOTHER—THEIR
CONVERSATIONS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE SPANISH
MATCH—THE MARRIAGE FINALLY CONCLUDED—
CHARLES'S CONDUCT TO THE RECUSANTS REGARDED
AS A PROOF OF HIS AVERSION TO CATHOLICS' HOPES.

CHAPTER II.

BUCKINGHAM had now returned to a house where more sources of real happiness awaited him than fall usually to the lot of the busy courtier and statesman. One drawback to his felicity, one stimulant to his return, had been the serious indisposition of the Duchess of Buckingham. Her uneasiness during her husband's absence, her vexation at the rumours which prevailed to his disadvantage, and, above all, the doubts of his fidelity which embittered their separation, had produced that condition which the physicians of the day generalized under the name of "melancholy."

Under these circumstances, the kindness of heart which formed part of King James's character, unaccompanied as it was with dignity or judgment, was manifested, and, at the same time,

he evinced his lively and unabated regard for Buckingham. An affection cannot be deemed wholly selfish which shows itself to those who are beloved by its object. James's compassion for the Duchess, the fatherly interest he took in her, and his continual acts of favour to her child, elevate the character of his preference for Buckingham. It has been the practice of historians to ridicule as a weakness the good-nature of this monarch; but those who felt its effect forgot, probably, the absurdity of its mode of manifestation in the benevolent impulses of the royal heart.

The “poor fool Kate,” as the King entitled the Duchess of Buckingham, met with incessant consideration on small and great points from His Majesty. During the year previous to the journey into Spain, the Duchess (then Marchioness) had given birth to another daughter; the King stood sponsor to the infant, and gave her the name of Jacobina. During the young mother’s illness, James testified the greatest anxiety, and “prayed heartily” for her; calling at Wallingford House, where she was, several times a day to inquire after her health.⁵¹ The child eventually died; and James was the more confirmed in his parental fondness for

⁵¹ State Papers. Domestic. March 30, 1622, vol. cxxviii., No. 96.

the Lady Mary Villiers, whom he usually denominated his grandchild, on the principle that her father was to him as a son. And now “my sweete Steenie” was the chief object of the King’s interest and gossip ; he wrote from Whitehall to the Duke, in Spain :—“I must give thee a short account of many things. First, Kate and thy sister (the Countess of Denbigh) supped with me on Saturday last, and yesterday bothe dined and supped with me, and so shall do still, with God’s grace, as long as I am here ; and my little grandchild, with her four teeth, is, God be thanked, well weaned, and they are all very merry.”⁵²

The Marchioness dined, during her convalescence, in the bed-chamber of the King, who gave a diamond chain, worth 3,500*l.*, with his picture, to the Duchess of Lennox, for having “made broths and caudles” for the Marchioness during her illness.⁵³

The Duchess had, it appeared, informed His Majesty of a domestic arrangement, all important to the mother and infant, but not usually deemed an affair such as royalty might condescend to take account of, or be a matter for an elderly pedant, like King James, to decide. “I hope my Lord Arran,” she wrote to the King, “has told

⁵² Birches’s MSS., 4174.

⁵³ State Papers, vol. cxxix., No. 92.

your Majesty that I mean to wean Moll very shortly. I would not by any means do it till I had made your Majesty acquainted with it; so I intend to make trial this very night how she will endure it.”⁵⁴ “Little Moll,” who afterwards married successively three times, is mentioned frequently in the domestic correspondence of the day.⁵⁵

James’s regard for the Duchess was also shown in another way. When the Duke applied to His Majesty for jewels, his young wife, scarcely twenty years of age, was eager to part with baubles which were so precious in the eyes of others, in order to advance Buckingham’s interest, and enhance his splendour at the Spanish Court. The King could hardly bear that his favourite should accept her generosity. “And now,” he wrote, “my sweet Steenie gossip, that the poor fool Kate hath also sent thee her pearl chain, which, by chance, I saw in a box in Frank Steward’s hand, I hope I need not to conjure thee not to give any of her jewels away there, for thou knowest what necessary use she will have of them at your return here, besides that it is not lucky to give away anything that I have given her.”⁵⁶ In his correspondence, James

⁵⁴ Nichols, p. 843; from papers in the Advocate’s Library, Edinburgh.

⁵⁵ Harleian, vol. 6987.

⁵⁶ Nichols, 850.

never forgot the Duchess. "This," he says, addressing Buckingham, "is the sixth time I have written to you two, five to Kate, two to Su (the Countess of Denbigh), and one to thy mother, Steenie, all with my own hands."⁵⁷ In presents of provisions he was considerate of her comfort, and so lavish that the Duke was wont to call his Majesty his "man-purveyor."

Like a good wife, the Duchess appears to have occupied herself, during the absence of her husband, in maintaining and improving Newhall and Burleigh, places in which the Duke felt a lively interest, and his mother participated in these exertions without any of that petty jealousy of interference being exhibited, which a less amiable mind than that of the Duchess might have disturbed.

"For Burley," she writes word, "I hear the wall is not very forward yet, and my lady" (the Countess) "bid me send you word that she is gone down to look how things are there. She says she is about making a littel river to run through the park. It will be about sixteen feet broad; but she says she wants money."⁵⁸

In all her letters to the Duke, the warmest affection is expressed by his wife; and she seems to

⁵⁷ Nichols, from Harleian MSS., 6987.

⁵⁸ State Papers, vol. cxi., No. 13.

have justified the encomiums of Archbishop Laud, who enters her name in his diary, as “that excellent lady, who is goodness itself.”⁵⁹

In the concerns of his mother, the Duke found much dissatisfaction. In June, 1622, the Countess of Buckingham received a hint to stay away from Court on account of the Progress, but really on account of her professing the Roman Catholic faith, or rather, perhaps, as a punishment for a little Court intrigue, relative to the Duchess of Lennox. When the ambassador from the Emperor of Austria took leave, it was thought necessary to bestow some jewel upon him as a mark of royal favour. James commanded one to be brought to him; it proved to be a chain which had belonged to Queen Anne, and which was worth three thousand pounds. James thought it too valuable for the ambassador, and refused to give it, saying, “wherein hath he deserved so much at my hands?” Prince Charles, hearing this, suggested that the chain should be bestowed on the Duchess of Lennox, who had received no present since her marriage. An assent was given; and the Prince undertook to carry the gift to her Grace. He put it round his own neck, and, taking it thence, presented it to the Duchess. This was regarded as so unusual an act of re-

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• Laud's Diary.

spect, that the Countess of Buckingham could not hear of it unmoved. Relying upon the unbounded favour of the King to her son, she took upon herself to send for the jewel back again the next day, saying it was required for a particular purpose, and that it should be requited with a gift equally costly. The Duchess of Lennox, astonished, questioned the messenger, who confessed that the Countess had sent him. The truth was then disclosed; of course, the Duchess was highly indignant; she sent back the messenger with this answer, that since the Prince had brought it to her, it should be taken back by no hand but her own; accordingly, on the following day, she went with the chain in her hand to the King, desiring to know how she had offended His Majesty. The King, when he comprehended the matter, swore that he was abused, and the Prince burst into a passion of anger, and declared that if the Countess of Buckingham stayed in the Court he would leave it. This story has been in some particulars, however, discredited, for several good reasons; but it may be regarded as characteristic of those to whom it refers; and as exemplifying the unbounded effrontery attributed to the mother of the Favourite.⁶⁰

A change was observed to have taken place in

• Harleian MSS., 389.—See Nichols, 1118, note.

the deportment of Buckingham almost immediately on his return from Spain. He became affable, and, therefore, "suddenly and strangely gracious among the multitude," so that, as Sir Henry Wotton expresses it, "he did seem for a time to have overcome that natural incompatibility which, in the experience of all ages, hath ever been noted between the vulgar and the sovereign favour. But this was no more than a meer bubble or blast, and like an ephemeral bit of applause, as eftsoon will appear in the sequel and train of his life."⁶¹

Shortly after his return from Spain, fresh honours were added to those with which Buckingham had been so richly endowed. The King, it was observed, had now grown into "an habitual and confirmed custom" of loading his favourite with benefits; and the Duke was, accordingly, made Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and Steward of the Manor of Hampton Court; "dignities and offices," says Sir Henry Wotton, "still growing out of trust and profit."

But this apparent prosperity was alloyed by many difficulties, and shaken by cabals, some stimulated by direst foes, others induced by hollow allies; and the career of the Favourite, like that of all the fortunate, began to be embittered and precarious.

^a Reliquiae Wottonianæ, 219.

There required, indeed, much condescension and courtesy to soften the exasperated feeling of the people against the promoter of the Spanish match. The pulpits, far from being “tuned” to its praise, were continually clamouring against the alliance.

There were strange signs of the times when, notwithstanding the almost absolute dominion of the Crown, it was found necessary to issue orders that the sanctity of the royal presence, and the dignity of the Privy Council should not be lowered by persons coming in booted and spurred — forbidding them also to go into chapel in that guise, and ordering them to remain uncovered during the service.⁶² In former days, James, as well as Elizabeth, had demanded an almost degrading respect; but the habits of the monarch had long since brought even royalty into contempt.

Accordingly, his influence over the pulpits had also decreased. James could not now control his impatience and petulance; even when listening to a sermon on Christmas-day, from the Bishop of London, the King, displeased at its length, talked so loud that the prelate was obliged to end abruptly. Urgent measures were taken to curb the taste for controversial sermons; and none below bachelors of divinity were henceforth to be

⁶² State Papers, Domestic, vol. cxxxvii., p. 5.

allowed to preach them ; for the Spanish match, and favour to recusants, were the great themes, especially when the King, on the plea that Protestants might find more freedom abroad, if there were more toleration here, released all Jesuits, priests, and persons refusing the oath of supremacy, who happened then to be in prison.⁶³ "Wise men," wrote one courtier to another, his kinsman, "are troubled, and betake themselves to prayers, rather than inquiry."⁶⁴ The clergy, meantime, had been ordered to pray for the Prince's prosperous journey and safe return ; but one stiff-necked preacher prayed "that God would be merciful to him now that he was going to the House of Rinnion.⁶⁵

The King had, however, before Charles's departure, given sensible and stringent instructions to the two chaplains who were to attend on the Prince, with regard to the reverential performance of divine service whilst in Spain. They were to preach "Christ crucified, and the doctrines of the English Church," but not to indulge in polemical discourses or in controversy. They might take with them Prayer-books, articles of

⁶³ State Papers, vol. cxxxix., No. 91.

⁶⁴ Ibid, vol. cxxxviii., No. 9 ; Dudley Carleton to Sir Dudley Carleton.

⁶⁵ Ibid, vol. cxxxii., No. 64.

religion, and the King's works.⁶⁶ At a later period, however, this was altered, and the Prince's "servants and chaplains" were ordered to follow him with chapel furniture and Prayer-books in Latin; the service was to be in Latin, and the communion celebrated with wafer-cakes and wine and water; "but it will be to no purpose," adds the writer of this news, "as the Spaniards will not go near them." Dr. Hakluyt, the Prince's former chaplain, had written a work against the Spanish match, calling the Spaniards idolaters, and had presented it to the Prince,⁶⁷ so that he was, it may be concluded, not among the "servants and chaplains," who were thus, according to the spirit of the day, coupled together as forming a part of the Prince's household.

The prejudice against the Infanta, as a future Queen of England, continued to increase, nor was it confined to uneducated or bigoted persons. It was supposed that, whilst Buckingham was in Spain, he received secret advices, which convinced him that to steer his course in safety, it would be necessary to break off a treaty which the Puritanical party regarded as a compact with Popery. "There were those who," says Bishop Hacket, "sent instructions into Spain, to adjure the Duke

⁶⁶ State Papers, vol. cxxxix., No. 71.

⁶⁷ Ibid, vol. cxxii., No. 88.

to do his best to prevent the espousals." The reasons assigned were "God's glory, and his own safety." "For God's sake, keep our orthodox religion from the admixture of that superstition which threatened against the soundness of it. And no corrosive so good to eat out the corruption of Romish rottenness creeping on, as to give the Spaniard the dodge, and leave the daughter of Spain behind." Such were the counsels despatched by friends to the Duke.

Consultations of his adherents were now held at Wallingford House, to consider what would be the best way of promoting, not the interests of the nation, but his own personal advancement. James had, of late, become partial to parliaments, and was resolved to close the next very graciously. "Therefore," observes Hacket, "the cabinet men at Wallingford House set upon it to consider by what exploit their lord should commence to be the 'Darling of the Commons,' and, as it were, to republicate his lordship, and to be precious to those who had the vogue to be lovers of their country." It was, therefore, determined to abandon the Spanish marriage, and to direct the attention of the country, and more especially the regard of the Prince, towards a daughter of France; and it was agreed that it would be for Buckingham's interests that he should have the

full credit of the newly projected alliance. From these considerations was the Spanish alliance thrown aside, with, it must be confessed, little regard to honour. Whether the evident disgust of the nation to the marriage formed sufficient plea for the crooked and complicated means which were taken to do away with a contract which had been so nearly brought to a conclusion, it remains for posterity to decide ; contemporaries were divided by faction, not reason.

It was in vain, by the arbitrary acts employed, to suppress public opinion. The Earl of Oxford had been committed to the Tower for saying that he hoped the time would come when justice would be free, and not come only through Buckingham's hands. This committal was an instance of the resolution at Court to crush all discussion. Gondomar, smooth to the great, was a perfect fury towards the small. The people had been indignant with him for having, before his return to Spain, struck a Scotsman with his fists, for saying that he had been ill-treated in Spain. The Scotsman, though he took the insult patiently, had been sent to prison.⁶⁸ These were but scanty specimens of the petty oppressions by which the voice of an aroused people was to be stopped. It was therefore time, Buckingham thought, to

• State Papers, vol. cxxix., No. 50. Domestic.

save himself, at all events, from the storm. Public hatred had been already shown when Don Diego, as Gondomar was called, passed through the city. The mob insulted him, and even threatened violence, “but none was used.” Three apprentices were, nevertheless, whipped at the cart’s tail for this slight to the Spanish ambassador, whilst the people looked, pitying, on ; and those who executed the sentence incurred much popular abuse. James, who was at that time angry with all who differed from him, came from Theobald’s to London in a rage to reprove such disorders. He was pacified by the Recorder, and contented himself with private admonition to the Aldermen to punish such offenders. Another man was then whipped, and those who murmured at the sentence arrested.⁶⁹

Steps were immediately taken to mark a difference between the conduct to be pursued to the Spanish and the French ambassadors ; and Charles, having first proposed an audience to the Marquis of Inojosa, granted it, under circumstances not very flattering. The Spanish ambassadors, having repaired to Theobald’s, returned not so well “satisfied as they ought” to be. They endeavoured, but in vain, to procure an audience of the King without the presence of

“ State Papers, vol. cxx., No. 71.

the Duke; but finding that impossible, they became disposed to arraign his conduct in the marriage before his face.⁷⁰

The public, meantime, could not fail to interpret the real temper of the King's Council by circumstances apparently trivial. In the course of the winter, there arrived from France a nobleman skilled in falconry, with a present of fifteen or sixteen cast-off hawks, some ten or twelve horses, and the same number of setters. He was accompanied by a numerous train, splendidly accoutred, and made his entry into London by torchlight. He was to remain until he had instructed the people in the kind of falconry in which he excelled, he and his troop costing the King from twenty-five to thirty pounds daily. Under this guise, probably, some political mission was couched; for James, although now fast declining, braved the advice of his physicians, and travelled to Newmarket on purpose to see these foreign hawks fly. He had put off the masque on Twelfth Night, on account, as he had assigned, of his indisposition; but actually because of the competition about precedence between the French and Spanish ambassadors, who could not be accommodated in his presence.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Nichols, 945.

⁷¹ Ibid, 960.

Thus did every variation in Buckingham's plans appear to prosper. That he could so work upon James's mind as to obliterate from it the cherished scheme of years, seems, indeed, a marvellous effect of his influence. For his ingratitude in this matter to the King, who had entrusted to him, as the object next his heart, the completion of the Spanish treaty, the Duke has justly been blamed. Could he, as Bishop Hacket asks, be deemed "execrable in point of honour and conscience? Did he do it the best for the King? Did he think the Spanish alliance would be fruitful in nothing but miseries, and that it would be a thankful office to lurch the King in his expectation of it? Evil befall such double diligence!" "Or did this great lord do it for the best for himself? I believe it. If the hope of the match died away, he lookt to get the love of the most in England; but if it were made up, he lookt for many enemies, for he had lost the love of the best in Spain. Let the Duke have his deserved praise in other things, great and many, but let fidelity, loyalty, and thankfulness hide their face, and not look upon this action."⁷²

The blame of this conduct was attributable, according to the same writer, more to those who

⁷² Life of Keeper Williams, 138.

worked upon the flexible temper of Buckingham than to his own wishes. But no one has a right to throw off his own shoulders, or to place on those of another, the deliberate violation of solemn engagements. "For it is," as the Bishop remarks, "not man, God that made the law: he that kindled the fire, let him make retribution."

It was not long before James began to suspect that he had been abused by the favourite whose fidelity ought to have been secured by gratitude. Among the friends of the Duke, there was one who looked disapprovingly on his conduct. This was the Lord Keeper Williams; a man of "as deep and large wisdom," says Bishop Hacket, "as I did ever speak with." Confessing the greatest obligations to Buckingham, Williams had the courage to oppose him, when conscience dictated a remonstrance.

"His enemies," says his biographer, "liked nothing worse in him than his courage, and he pleased himself in nothing more." Of a stately presence, and possessing abilities to maintain that lofty demeanour which is absurd when not supported by real superiority of intellect, Williams could cope with the haughty Buckingham, whose headstrong will had become such that none of the King's ministers could move it. Williams, too, was of temper somewhat irritable.

I presume, will lenifie. Only measure not the *size* of good counsel by the *last* of success.” After this address, Williams had proposed that controversies between learned men, in which that age so much delighted, should be held for the Countess of Buckingham’s edification; that the King should be present at this; and the “conflux of great persons, as thick as the place would permit.” Then should Buckingham’s industry and zeal be manifested to “catch at every twig or advantage,” to give weight to every solid reason, to bring his mother into a sound mind again. If successful, the Duke would “save a soul very precious to him;” if unsuccessful, then the favourite’s pious endeavours would fill the King with a good report,” and impart a “sweet savour” to all.

The result had justified the Lord Keeper’s anticipations; the Jesuit father, Fisher, was the champion in whom the Countess most relied; the King was the superintendent of the controversy. Dr. Francis White, then Dean of Carlisle, had gone first into the lists with Fisher, and given him “foil for foil,” according to the testimony of the Protestant party. But the lady was still unconvinced. The Lord Keeper engaged, therefore, in the combat. He managed the disputation with infinite skill, guided by wordly wisdom, mixed up

with Christian charity. He had observed in the former conflict, that if some of the Jesuit's arguments were admitted, "the Church of England, repurging itself from the super-injected errors of Rome, would stand inculpable." He laboured, therefore, to show that if "unnecessary strifes were discreetly waved, little was wanting to a conclusive unity." The King greatly commended this conciliatory mode of disputation, which surprised and baffled Fisher, yet which still failed to bring back the wanderers to their former path. The third who had contended for the palm of victory, to bring, as Hacket calls it, "eye-salve to the dim-sighted lady, was Bishop Laud, who was declared to have galled Fisher with great acuteness." But all his labour was vain, as far as the Countess was concerned; she continued in her new belief. The conference had, however, effected what was desired for her son. He had appeared as an antagonist in the field against one whom he honoured, and whom he had treated with the deepest respect. He was "blazed abroad as the Red Cross Knight that was Una's champion against Archinago."⁷⁵ And this scheme, which produced results afterwards, as well as at the time they were effected, of the utmost importance to Buckingham, had been

⁷⁵ Hacket's Life of Williams, pp. 172, 173.

accomplished from the suggestions and by the skill of the Lord Keeper Williams.

It may therefore be supposed that Buckingham would listen with reverence to his representations, when the Lord Keeper ventured to warn him from the course he was pursuing. So far, however, from such being the case, the Duke never forgave him for a letter addressed to him whilst in Spain, advising a reconciliation with the Earl of Bristol, whose knowledge of Spanish affairs, and repeated success in negotiations, would, it was thought, secure the completion of the marriage treaty.⁷⁶ Even whilst writing the letter, which seemed to alienate Williams from Buckingham for a time, the Lord Keeper was aware that he had already incurred the favourite's displeasure. "What I wrote formerly," he says, "may be ill-placed, and offend your grace, but all proceeded from as true and sincere a heart as you left behind you in all this kingdom."⁷⁷ The Earl of Bristol, on hearing of this act of mediation, argued truly when he anticipated that it would produce a quarrel. He wrote to Williams to the following effect, "that the friendship of the Duke was a thing he did infinitely desire, that he did infinitely esteem the good offices that the Lord Keeper had done therein, but that he

⁷⁶ Hacket's Life of Williams, p. 147.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

conceived that any motion he had made in that kind had been despised rather than received with thankfulness.”⁷⁸

Buckingham had formerly been compared to Alcibiades, the Lord Keeper to Socrates; but all obligations to that supposed Socrates were henceforth annulled. The interference of Williams, creditable to himself, and due to the King, was so misinterpreted that Buckingham withdrew from him his friendship, forgetting not only the axiom of Solon, “never to choose a friend suddenly, nor to lose him suddenly,” but the still stronger argument of services which could not be denied. During the Duke’s absence in Spain, Williams had watched over his welfare with the utmost care; he had ventured boldly to speak the truth to him; a benefit scarcely less important; yet Buckingham could not be appeased.

He instantly avowed his determination, expressed with such effrontery and openness that it was soon conveyed to Williams, that he “would pluck down the highest roof of the Lord Keeper’s dignity.” Williams, however, remained undaunted. He knew the favourite well. He allowed him to be a “generous and incorrupt patron, a great exacter of duty from those whom he served, and a bitter enemy.” But he confided in his own

⁷⁸ Hacket, 148.

powers of rhetoric, and in the pliable temper of his former friend. The Earl of Rutland, Buckingham's father-in-law, was employed to mediate between them ; and to him the Duke said, referring to Williams, " Whenever I disagree with him, he will prove himself to be in the right ; and though I could never convict him of being dishonest, I am afraid of his wit."

Before Buckingham returned, Williams sent another letter, warning him of the risk he ran, and offering excellent advice on the subject of the Spanish treaty, and upon the Duke's demeanour. The Spaniards had remarked with resentment that when Charles attempted to speak in Buckingham's presence, the Duke took the words out of his mouth, or checked, with an abrupt contradiction, what he had to say ; the more gently Charles endured this presumption, the greater was the general admiration expressed towards him, and disgust towards his favourite. The Spaniards, who never address their kings first, were indignant with his freedom, which constituted one of those points against which Williams had warned the Duke. It was in vain that the Lord Keeper strove to conciliate Buckingham, in vain that he praised the Duke's skill and energy in the marriage treaty to King James ; a breach was made, which was never entirely re-

paired, and which is as discreditable to the Duke of Buckingham as any of those violations of good faith and propriety by which his career was sullied.

On Tuesday, the thirteenth of January, whilst Buckingham's disfavour with the King was suspected, a singular scene took place. The King, being much disturbed by his affairs, resolved to go to Theobald's for change of scene. His health was now completely broken, and the vexatious and arbitrary conduct of his favourite added greatly to his sufferings. The morning before he left Whitehall, he received the various foreign ambassadors—the Venetian was first admitted, the French second, the Spanish last. They were introduced privately; and, after a full hour's audience, the Prince and Buckingham were called in; what passed remained a secret, but the Prince and Duke were observed to come out looking very much dejected.

The Duke's carriage stood at the door, ready to follow that of the King to London; and the favourite was prepared, as usual, to accompany his royal master in his own coach. The King and his son were in the coach, when the Duke received an intimation from His Majesty that he was not to go. Buckingham, it is related, with tears in his eyes, entreated "his Master" to inform him

how he had offended his gracious sovereign. "I vow," he added sternly, "to purge, or confess it." James, also, shed tears, and exclaiming that he was the unhappiest man alive, to be forsaken by those who were dearest to him, ordered his coach to drive on, and the Duke was left standing, dismayed, and probably indignant. Charles, who witnessed this scene, behaved with his usual weakness, his tears, also, expressing his concern and contrition.

Buckingham retired to Wallingford House, where, sometime afterwards, the Lord Keeper Williams went to him, having with difficulty been admitted. "He found him," says Bishop Hacket, "lying on a couch, in that unmovable posture that he would neither rise up nor speak, though invited twice or thrice with courteous questions." But Williams generously consoled him, admonishing that he believed "God's directing hand was in it, to stir up his grace;" he assured him that he came on purpose to bring him out of his sorrow with the light of the King's favour. He besought the Duke to set off instantly for Windsor; not however to show himself to His Majesty before supper was over, and then to deport himself with all "amiable addresses;" not "to quit the King night or day, for the danger was that some would thrust themselves in to push his Majesty on to break

utterly with the Parliament; and the next degree of theirs to be was, upon that dissolution, to see his grace convicted to the Tower, and God knows what would follow.”⁷⁹

The Duke, as if awakening from a dream, aroused himself, and set off, on the following day, to Theobald’s, where he arrived before he was expected.

Thus, to Williams’ mediation, did Buckingham owe the avoidance of any open displeasure on the part of his sovereign; unhappily this obligation did not cancel in the Duke’s mind that avowal of a difference in opinion, and that condemnation of the policy pursued towards Spain which Williams esteemed it his duty to express.

Opinions differed as to the actual obligations of the Prince to complete the contract with the Infanta.

The Earl of Bristol declared that the King and the Prince stood as much engaged to it as princes could be; but Charles is said to have styled himself, as he knelt down before the King, at Royston,

⁷⁹ See Hacket’s Life of Williams. Also Mr. Chamberlain’s Letter to Sir Dudley Carleton, quoted in Nichols, 961, from Birch’s MSS., Brit. Mus., 417. These separate accounts are here connected; and Mr. Chamberlain’s date and statement of the place to which the King went, adopted upon the ground given by Nichols.

to have been “an absolute free man, but with one limitation—the restitution of the Palatinate.”⁸⁰

These matters, painful and disgraceful as they were, were not concluded until the end of the year 1624, when the “golden cord,” as Bishop Hacket terms it, was broken. “Nothing,” adds the same authority, “is more sure than that the Prince’s heart was removed from the desire of that marriage after the Duke had brought him away from the object of that delightful and ravishing beauty.”⁸¹ If the report of other historians be credited, a far greater degree of constancy was shown by the young Princess whose affections were thus cruelly gained, and then sacrificed. After an acquaintance of many months, during which every possible exertion had been made by Charles to win her regard, these young persons, affianced as they doubtless were, had separated on terms of the closest affection. “The rare Infanta,” as she was styled, “seemed to deliver up her own heart at parting in as high expression as that language, and her learning could, with her honour, set out.” And when Charles had assured her that “*his* heart would never be out of anxiety till she had passed the intended voyage, and were safe on British land,” she answered with a blush, “that should she

⁸⁰ Hacket, 164.

⁸¹ Ibid, 167.

happen to be in danger upon the ocean, or discomposed in health with the rolling, brackish waters, she would cheer up herself, and remember to whom she was going.”⁸² After his departure the Princess began to study English “a-pace,”⁸³ two Englishmen, the one a Mr. Wadsworth, and the other Father Boniface, being appointed to teach her. The English ambassador, and all the ambassadors in Madrid from other countries, gave her the title and style of an English Princess, the Earl of Bristol and Sir Walter Aston remaining uncovered in her presence. In order to pass the period of absence, the Infanta employed herself in working “divers suits of rich cloths” for Charles, of perfumed ambar leather, some embroidered with pearls, others with gold and silver. Her household was on the eve of being settled, and nothing but one more despatch from home was expected, and then the solemnization of the nuptials would take place. In the midst of these preparations, one circumstance puzzled observers. “There is,” says Howell, “one Mr. Clerk (with the lame arm), that came hither from the seaside as soon as the Prince was gone; he is one of the Duke of Buckingham’s creatures, yet he is at the Earl

⁸² Hacket, 161. From Sanderson, p. 552; taken from the Spanish reports of their conference.

⁸³ Howell’s Letters.

of Bristol's house, which we wonder at, considering the darkness that hapned 'twixt the Duke and the Earl. We fear that this Clerk hath brought about something that may puzzle the business."

Nevertheless, the preparations for the espousals proceeded; the first check given to them being a letter from Prince Charles, desiring Lord Bristol not to deliver up his proxy to the marriage to the King of Spain until further notice from England. On receiving this intimation, Lord Bristol observed "that he and Sir Walter Aston had a commission under the Broad Seal of England to conclude the match, and that there could not be a better favour for the surrender of the Palatinate than the Infanta, who would never rest until she had merited the love of the British nation." He did not, therefore, relax his preparations; and provided rich liveries of watered velvet, with silver lace up to the very capes of the cloaks for his servants; and, in a fortnight afterwards, the ratification arrived, the marriage-day was fixed, and a terrace, covered with tapestry, was raised from the King's Palace to the next church, a distance about the same as that between Whitehall and Westminster Abbey. But when she stood thus on the very threshold of her happiness, as she deemed it, the Infanta was doomed to be rejected and dis-

appointed. “She had studied,” writes Bishop Hacket, “our language, our habit, our behaviour, everything but our religion, to make her English. Her conversation turned continually upon the Prince, and on her projected voyage to England in the spring. On the other hand, she was led to suppose that Charles admired her for her beauty ; that his attachment was equal to her own ; and that he was worthy of the affection which she undoubtedly bore him.”⁸⁴

The young King of Spain, her brother, participated in the sentiments of personal attachment which Charles appears to have inspired in those who beheld him, in the prime of his youth, at the Court of Madrid. Philip was now anxious to conclude the marriage, which he meant to do on the day on which his infant daughter was christened. Invitations were actually sent to the principal nobility to attend the espousals by proxy ; ordinance was ordered to be fired off in the port-towns ; and all Spain was prohibited from speaking disadvantageously of the alliance ; when a new commission to Lord Bristol arrived. By this he was forbidden to deliver up the Prince’s proxy until a full and absolute satisfaction for the surrender of the Palatinate was given under the hand and seal of the King of Spain.

⁸⁴ Life of Lord Keeper Williams, p. 164.

This pretext—for the plea of the Palatinate could not in justice be adduced at this stage of the treaty—was met by the insulted Philip IV. with spirit. He replied that the “Palatinate was not his to give;” that he held only a few towns there; but that if the King of Great Britain would set a treaty on foot, he would send his own ambassador to join in it.⁸⁵ But the final blow was given to the Spanish treaty. Lord Bristol was prohibited from delivering any more letters to the Infanta, and her title of Princess of England and Wales was prohibited.

The King, on his return to Whitehall, commissioned a select junto to inquire, whether, in the treaty with the King of Spain, that monarch had been sincere to the last in his desire to satisfy the Prince and the Duke; and whether, in the treaty for the restitution of the Palatinate, he had violated the league between the two kingdoms, so as to deserve a war to be proclaimed against him.⁸⁶

Some of the proceedings of this junto having been bruited abroad, it was found that they were divided into three parties, five of their number being for the Spanish marriage—among whom was the Lord Keeper Williams—four neutral, and three directly against the alliance. These were the Duke of Buckingham, who sent his vote, the

⁸⁵ Nichols, p. 943.

⁸⁶ Hacket, 157.

Earl of Carlisle, and Secretary Conway. The evident distaste which Charles now showed for the match had a great influence in the deliberations of the junto. The Earl of Pembroke, Lord Chamberlain, who was at first neutral, "nobly spoke out, declaring it as his opinion that, if the Spaniards performed the conditions, he saw not how the thing could in honour draw back." It was supposed that this candid declaration was owing to some pique between him and Buckingham. Much heart-burning, indeed, existed on the part of several of the junto towards the favourite, who engrossed, as it was plainly seen, the regards both of the King and of his son, and contrived to cut off all access to those whom it was his aim wholly to govern.⁸⁷

But the chief object of Buckingham's wrath was Williams. "The proceedings in this affair were," says Bishop Hacket, "so far against the Lord Keeper's mind, that he wished, before a friend or two in private, that a fever in his sick-bed might excuse him." Buckingham was now become incapable of that generous candour which permits a friend to differ in opinion. He "was now mortally anti-Spanish," as Bishop Hacket observes, "and his anger was headed with steel." He assayed the Lord Keeper to hale him to his

⁸⁷ Nichols, p. 964.

judgment, as an eddy does a small boat," and would have persuaded him to influence the King against Spain; but he found him as "inflexible as a dried bough." When pressed by the favourite to advance his views, he declared that, as God was his protector, he would suffer all the obloquy in the world, rather than be ungrateful to the Duke. But when the King asked his judgment—he must be true and faithful—Buckingham, to his discredit be it spoken, had not the generosity to appreciate Williams. The Duke had been apprized that James, addressing the Earl of Carlisle, had remarked, "that had he sent Williams into Spain, he would have kept both heart's ease and honour, both of which he lacked at that time." And one day, when Prince Charles was present, James, looking at Williams, said, "This is the man that makes us keep merry Christmas." The Prince, not seeming to understand his father, the King explained himself. "It is he," he said, "that laboured more dexterously than all my servants to bring you safe back home this Christmas, and I hope you are sensible of it." A finishing stroke was put to Buckingham's mortification when the King announced his intention of promoting the Lord Keeper to the Archbishopric of York when next it should be vacant.^{ss}

^{ss} Hacket, 168.

The decision of the junto exonerated Philip IV. from any hollowness in his share of the treaty. They blamed the Earl of Bristol for not revoking the proxy, which was left in his hands sooner, and thus stopping those preparations for the nuptials which had rendered the King of Spain ridiculous. But when they voted that that Monarch should be defied with open war, till amends were made to the Prince Palatine for the wrongs he had suffered, the majority of the conference hesitated, and refused to say more than that the “girths of peace were slack, but not broken.” Buckingham had now become wholly impatient of opposition; scarcely any of the council had voted to his satisfaction. Sometimes strange scenes were witnessed in the conference; the fiery Duke would arise, and “chafe against” those who opposed him from room to room, “as a hen who has lost her brood, and clucks up and down when there is none to follow her.” Upon meeting Lord Belfast, one of the party adverse to his wishes, he asked him contemptuously, “Are you turned too? and flung from him; upon which Lord Belfast, in a manly and candid letter, announced his resolution to conform in all things to the pleasure of his royal master.” But the greatest anger was displayed by Buckingham against the Lord Keeper, who seldom spoke,

but who, when he gave his opinion, swayed that of the majority.⁸⁹

Buckingham was not of a character to dissemble his feelings; and his displeasure was shown, not only in his countenance, but expressed in angry expostulations. He told Bishop Laud that the Lord Keeper had so strangely forgotten himself to him that he seemed to be "dead in his affections." Laud, who was devotedly attached to the favourite and his family, meeting Williams in the withdrawing-chamber at Whitehall, "fell into very hot words with him," which were reported to the Duke. Eventually, however, these differences were healed, and, in February, 1624, a reconciliation was effected through the mediation of Laud. From henceforth, nothing but an appearance of friendship subsisted between Buckingham and Williams. "The wound," says Dr. Heylyn, "was only stunned, not healed, and festered the more dangerously, because the secret rancour of it could not be discerned."⁹⁰

The issue of all this was that the Duke insisted on a parliament, by way of appeal;⁹¹ and during the heat of these Court cabals, that body was assembled at Westminster in February.

Meantime, public aversion to the match was

⁸⁹ Hacket, p. 69.

⁹⁰ Heylyn's Life of Laud, p. 113.

⁹¹ Hacket, p. 169.

from time to time forcibly expressed. The pulpits were still profaned by political allusions ; a clergyman named Knight was committed for preaching that tyrannical kings might be brought to order by their subjects ; a doctrine which appeared so monstrous to James, that he talked of having the sermon burned by the hangman.⁹² This arrest took place at Oxford ; the King highly approved the proceedings, and directions were forthwith sent to the heads of the colleges, to desire the students to apply themselves to the Scriptures, to general councils, and the ancient fathers and schoolmen, excluding the heretical doctrines of both Jesuits and Puritans. The document which contains these directions is still extant, and is endorsed by Laud. Sedition seems not to have been the only rank weed that then sprang up in the universities.⁹³

The King, in addressing the Parliament, declared that he had called them together to correct previous misunderstandings ; that he would cherish his people as a husband does his wife ; he wished for their advice in matters of the greatest moment ; he had long been engaged in treaties, hoping to settle the peace of Christendom, but had found treaties fallacious. With regard to

⁹² State Papers, cxxix., No. 62.

⁹³ Ibid, cxix., No. 68.

Spain, he referred the houses to the secretaries, the Prince, and to Buckingham; on their good advice he conceived the felicity of the kingdom depended. He had never, he said, neglected religion, nor intended anything but a temporary indulgence to recusants. He concluded this original and eccentric harangue (rather different from a modern royal speech) by saying that he knew that never was there a king more beloved than himself, and that he wished the two houses to be the mirrors of the people.⁹⁴

The Speaker was then elected; and Sir Thomas Crewe, sergeant-at-law, in his reply, recalled the benefits of the good parliament in the thirty-second year of Henry VIII., and the thirty-ninth of Elizabeth.

Soon afterwards, More, an attorney, was sentenced to lose both his ears "for speaking disrespectfully of those two deceased monarchs." Such was English liberty. The culprit laughed whilst the sentence was being put into execution in Cheapside. A proclamation was issued, ordering priests and Jesuits to leave Ireland within forty days;⁹⁵ so instant was the change from toleration to persecution. James was not more free from troubles about Ireland than his successors have

⁹⁴ State Papers, vol. cxix., No. 55.

⁹⁵ Ibid, No. 70.

been. On visiting the State Paper Office, and seeing a large mass of documents relating to that island there, he had once remarked that there was “more ado about Ireland than about any of his dominions.”⁹⁶

The Duke had now so completely regained the love of the people, by his abandoning the Spanish marriage, that it was proposed in the Lower House to confirm all his lands and honours to him by act of parliament; but the reply was that this was no time to commend men, though deserving well.⁹⁷ A few days afterwards, the Prince told the Upper House that they need not fear “advising a breach, for if we did not begin the war, Spain would.”

In the House of Commons, Sir Benjamin Rudyard declared that the King of Spain had verified the proverb that kings’ daughters are so many ways to deceive their neighbours; and that since the match was first thought of, much Papistry had sprung up amongst the people; that Protestantism was disunited as in Germany; suppressed as in France; threatened as in Holland. All the speakers on this memorable occasion praised the Prince. Rudyard declared that he had shown both courage and wisdom in his

⁹⁶ State Papers.

⁹⁷ Ibid, Nos. 93, 94.—Locke to Carleton,

journey, which “had matured his excellent parts.” The Lord Keeper Williams related how the Prince had sent a message to the council, to say that though he stole to Spain for love, he would not steal back again for fear; how he had told Grimes, one of his servants, to tell his father, in case he should hear that he was detained, to think of him no more as a son, for he would be lost, but to place all his affections on his sister.⁹⁸ On the second of March, Sir Edward Coke was instructed by the Commons to advise the Lords of their unanimous resolution to counsel the King to break the treaties with Spain; and was instructed to request the Lords to join in a petition to make a declaration to that effect, which should comfort his people and encourage his allies abroad.⁹⁹ Sir Edward answered, that he never knew a petition of both houses refused; he could not say anything more “for weeping;” and Sir Thomas Edmondes, treasurer of the household, taking up the pecuniary part of the question, said that the “mysteries of delusion in the treaties were now discovered, and that the Spanish, having enticed us from the match with France, now offered, instead of a dowry of 600,000*l.*, only 20,000*l.* yearly with the Infanta,

⁹⁸ State Papers, clx., Nos. 8 and 10.

⁹⁹ Ibid., Nos. 1 and 33.

and some jewels ; whilst France would give a wedding portion of 240,000*l.*" This, perhaps, considering the King's debts, and the almost bankrupt state of the treasury, was probably a stronger argument with James than the restitution of the Palatinate, or the security of Protestantism, on which points his conscience seems to have been conveniently callous.

On the twenty-sixth of February, Buckingham, assisted by the Prince, addressed the houses, beginning from the first negotiation at Brussels, which had raised doubts of the Spanish King's sincerity, and induced the Prince to go himself to Spain ; and had disclosed the fact that neither the marriage, nor the restitution of the Palatinate, was intended. Many letters were read to and from the chief parties concerned in the treaty, and the houses were asked whether the King should act on the assurances given, or "stand on his own feet." It was soon resolved that the King should not accept their answer. The houses applauded the Duke's conduct, and requested the King to break off the treaties.¹

Upon this resolution, the spirits of the anti-Catholics were so much excited that a request was sent James to order a fast for the happy deliverance of the Prince ; and no member of parlia-

¹ State Papers, vol. clix., No. 83.

ment was henceforth to be allowed to retain recusant servants.² Soon afterwards the Lower House informed the Upper that the Spanish ambassadors declared that Buckingham deserved to lose his head for wronging the King of Spain, but that the Commons had acquitted him, and the Upper House appointed a committee, who did the same.³ On the same day, the Duke made a motion in the House of Peers to "thwart the King of Spain in the Indies," by way of a commencement of hostilities. The Upper House, indeed, cried out loudly for hostilities, more especially the bishops; and the Bishop of Durham was so excited that he declared he would lay down his rochet, and gird on a sword if the King would take that course. This excitement was heightened by the following anecdote. Buckingham, having been present when the Spanish ambassador told the King that his master had deprived a bishop for speaking disrespectfully of James, had answered, "It was true; and he had admired the justice of his Spanish Majesty therein, but still more his mercy, for in a few days he gave the man a bishopric worth thrice of his former prelacy." These particulars were stated by some members in the debates.⁴

It is not improbable that the exaggerated fears

² State Papers, No. 92.

³ Ibid, No. 85.

⁴ Letter from Secretary Conway to Carleton.

of the people, on the one hand, and the expectations of the Catholics, on the other, may have alarmed Charles, who was firmly attached to the Church of England. Upon an application being made to Pope Gregory the XV. to grant a dispensation for the marriage, that Pontiff had replied in a Latin letter, expressing, first, his regret at the altered state of Britain;⁵ next, his hopes that, as under his predecessor, Gregory the Great, Apostolical authority had been there established, he might be permitted to see it re-established by the conversion of the Prince, "the flower of the Christian world," who had proved, by seeking a Catholic Princess, that he did not hate the see of Rome. He then set before the Prince the example of his Highness's ancestors, and concluded with hoping that Charles would become "the infranshiser of Brittayne."

Several Catholics who had worn a mask of Protestantism now threw it off, and in hopes of toleration, avowed themselves Romanists; amongst these were Sir John Wentworth and Lord Vaughan. "Everyone," Lady Hatton wrote to Carleton, "was on the wing for Spain;" but, "in spite of her walks and talks with Gondomar," she would ever, she said, oppose his country.⁶

⁵ State Papers, vol. clxiii., No. 59.—April 10, 1623.

⁶ Ibid, vol. clxiii., No. 2.

Nor were the Catholics without reason in their dreams of enjoying a degree of security and toleration long most unjustly and cruelly withheld. Even after James had begun to listen to the changed tone adopted by Buckingham, preparations had been going on, both for the reception and maintenance of the Infanta, which might well afford hopes of religious liberty. It was reported that the marriage conditions were to be, the liberation of the Catholics and the abandonment of the Hollanders. The Spanish ambassador surveyed Denmark House and St. James's, where "lodgings," as they were styled, were prepared for the Infanta. At each place, he ordered a new chapel, and Inigo Jones was to prepare each with great costliness. The Spanish ambassador laid the stone of a new chapel for the Infanta at St. James's, whilst the Savoy chapel was to be given up to the Infanta's suite.

"After the London bonfires," adds Mr. Chamberlain, who tells in the same tone good and bad tidings, "Oxford lit fires and rung bells, and wrote verses in honour of the match."⁷ It appears, indeed, from a letter of Lord Treasurer Middlesex to Secretary Conway, that it was even in contemplation to decorate the chapel with jewels;

⁷ State Papers, vol. cxliv., No. 13.

“Sir Peter Lore’s jewels, and others of the Countess of Suffolk, now in pawn, should,” wrote the Lord Treasurer, immediately after referring to his preparing the chapel, “be submitted to His Majesty’s inspection, though he hoped the King would not declare which he preferred, as advantage would be taken of his preference, but leave the Chancellor himself, and others, “to bargain for them, as there was great necessity for frugality.”⁸

The King, indeed, up to the very moment of his son’s return, had been sanguine of the marriage, and delighted to talk over the adventures of the journey, during which Buckingham had had seven falls, Sir Francis Cottington twelve, and the Prince not one; but his tone was now beginning to alter, which seemed strange to those who knew the King’s circumstances, and who considered how splendid a dower was expected with the Infanta. Lord Middlesex, who was afterwards discovered to have embezzled public money, had declared himself “sick at heart” with the idea of all these extraordinary charges, when the King was so ill able to meet even his ordinary expenses. Like all servants who rob their masters, his zeal was laudable; he could not, he wrote, “hold out, unless some extraordinary reply be thought of, or some large sums

⁸ Lord Middlesex to Secretary Conway.—State Papers, vol. cxliii., No. 20.

come in from Spain with the fleet ; but would pawn his whole estate for the present.”⁹

It was a gift from a lady that brought first the altered sentiments of Prince Charles to light. In the course of March, 1624, the Countess of Olivares had sent him a large present of provisions, comprising gammons of bacon, vessels of olives, special figs, sweet lemons, capers and caperons, suchets, and sweet meats ; he vouchsafed not even to see them. They were conveyed into the riding place at St. James’s, and left to the disposal of Mr. Francis Cottington.¹⁰ On the twenty-third of March, James informed his Privy Council that he was about to send a messenger to Spain, to signify to the King that his Parliament had advised him to break off the treaty, and that he intended proceeding to recover the Palatinate as he might. “ Bonfires were made in the city,” says Archbishop Laud, “ for joy that we should break with Spain.” Prince Charles gave great satisfaction to the Parliament, where he was a constant attendant, by declaring that should he choose any one of a different religion from his own, it would be with a caution that his consort, and her foreign servants, alone should be permitted the

⁹ Lord Middlesex to Secretary Conway.—State Papers, vol. cxlii., No. 60.

¹⁰ Nichols, p. 962.

exercise of their faith.¹¹ It was not, however, until the tenth of December in the same year, that a ship was sent to Spain to fetch back the jewels that had been bestowed on the Infanta and the royal family there; when, by the proposal of the Spaniards themselves, they were returned. They were placed under the care of James Howell, whose familiar letters are so well known, and the news of their arrival was conveyed by him to the King.¹² The Infanta, as an account from Spain testified, was greatly distressed by these proceedings. The termination of this treaty was, as Bishop Hacket remarks, "flat and unfortunate. Not an inch of the Palatinate better for it, and we the worse from wars in all countries." The same writer justly observes that the Spanish as a nation are preferable to the French; that the Spanish ladies, who have been united to English princes, have been "virtuous, mild, thrifty, and beloved of all."

The conduct of Charles in this affair gave a presage of that vacillating and insincere policy which, in his after life, stamped a character full of beautiful indications and gentle qualities, with duplicity. "But to his life's end," remarks Hacket, "he had a quality, I will not call it

¹¹ Nichols, p. 970.

¹² Ibid, p. 849.

humility, it is something like, but it is not it, to be easily persuaded out of his own knowledge and judgment by some whom he permitted to have power over him, who had not the half of his intellectuals." The public, however, remarked that the "brave prince," as they called him, was "bettered in his judgment after his return from Spain."¹³

Buckingham's conduct drew forth still more severe censures. It was observed that in advising the Prince to break off the treaty, he had only counselled what he had often done himself; for he was said to have given promises of marriage to many within the Court, and to have withdrawn from the fulfilment.¹⁴ Harassed by the censures cast upon him, Buckingham's health and spirits sank under the alternate excitement of his too dazzling career, and the depression of blame and opposition. "A fever, the jaundice, and I know not what else," are described, in a letter from Mr. Chamberlain, as his disease. For this he was "let blood thrice;" "yet the world," adds the same writer, "thinks he is more sick in mind than body, and that he declines apace." The King in vain endeavoured to reconcile him to the Earl of Bristol, who had returned from Spain

¹³ State Papers.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 972, 975.

some time previously. That nobleman was ordered not to leave his house, although many gracious messages were sent to him from the King.¹⁵ Buckingham, however, passed much of his time with the King, "with as much freedom and love as ever."¹⁶

The Duke of Buckingham was attended in his illness by Sir Theodore Mayerne, the favourite court physician. From an entry in a journal of cases kept by that eminent man, and styled by him his "*Ephemerides Anglicæ*," it appears that Buckingham was not unfrequently the subject of his care and skill. In 1617 he had been troubled with a tumour in the right ear, owing to riding bareheaded in the winter, when hunting with the King; and the mode of life pursued in James's society, the habits of intemperance prevalent in those days, and the absence of any strict moral principle, were, as Mayerne's details are said to prove, highly injurious to the general health of the Favourite,¹⁷ who is specified, in Sir Theodore's

¹⁵ Hacket, from *Cabala*, p. 223.

¹⁶ State Papers.

¹⁷ Ellis's *Original Letters*, 2nd series, vol. iii., p. 245-46. There are nineteen volumes in the Sloane MSS., British Museum, consisting of notes in Latin, in the handwriting of Mayerne, forming a journal of the cases which he attended from 1611 to 1649. "These," says Sir Henry Ellis, "may be styled, for the period they embrace, 'Medical Annals of the Court of England.'"

voluminous collection, under the name of Palamedes. Every one remarked that Buckingham had, since his return, become pensive. "The Prince," writes Mr. Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, "hath got a beard, and is cheerful; the Marquis (some conceive) not so." The expenses of the Spanish journey were very considerable; and in the impoverished state of James's treasury, they might naturally provoke difficulties far from agreeable to the main projectors of that enterprise. They amounted, according to a release given by Prince Charles to Sir Francis Cottington, to 50,027*l.* Prince Charles, before he left Spain, had given presents to the amount of 12,000*l.*

But it appears that the nation, pleased that the heir-apparent of Great Britain should have an opportunity of seeing two great kingdoms, and proud of his discretion and princely demeanour, were far from regretting that the journey had taken place, but rejoiced that he had returned in health, and without any change in his religious opinions.¹⁸

The Prince, it was now said, disliked a Dutch match, and refused a Spanish one, until full restoration of the Palatinate and Electorals. "A lady," Dudley Carleton remarked, "wise in

¹⁸ State Papers. Letter from Edward Herbert to James I., p. 163.

these matters, declared she saw no symptom of his being in love."¹⁹ The talk of the Spanish match became daily cooler, and another was said to be under consideration at Vienna; whilst the Prince's safe return was, as many thought, a "marvel to all;" and a great man told him that he might thank God and his sister for it.²⁰

In the course of these discussions an accident occurred, which too plainly showed the temper of the times. A house had been hired by the Roman Catholics, next to that of the French ambassador, in order to celebrate mass, and to hear Father Drury, a famous Jesuit preacher. The day chosen for the opening of the tenement was the fifth of November. That day the roof fell in, whilst these worshippers were assembled, and ninety-five people, Drury among the number, were killed. It seems difficult, in the present state of public feeling, to believe that, as the crashing ruins entombed the victims beneath them, the barbarous multitude, who might term themselves Protestants, but were not to be called Christians, "rather railed and taunted the sufferers, than helped them." Nor did the bitterness of persecution end there, for the Bishop of London refused to allow these unfortunate people to be interred

¹⁹ State Papers, vol. cliv., No. 2.

²⁰ Ibid, No. 17.

in any churchyard in the City; the dead were therefore buried in two pits behind the houses which had fallen in, and black crosses were placed above their graves. This event made a deep impression. It was the first solemn meeting of recusants for sixty years; the Puritans styled it a judgment; the Romanists declared that it could not be such, for that those dying in that way escape purgatory. The preachers in the churches, however, treated the question "charitably and temperately."²¹ Masses for the sufferers were said at Ely House, in the presence of all the Spanish Legation, Sir Tobie Mathew appearing as chief mourner.²²

People began to fear Buckingham more than even Prince Charles himself; he was styled the "dictator, not only of England, Ireland, and of Scotland, but of the King himself,"²³ and he henceforth courted popularity, inviting himself to the houses of the influential citizens, which seemed nevertheless to imply that he dreaded lest some impending storm should be lowering over his destiny.

During the whole of this year, however, Buckingham's security was being undermined; and, had

²¹ Letter from Chamberlain to Carleton.

²² State Papers, vol. clxiv., No. 17.

²³ Coke's *Detections*, p. 224.

it not been for the unfathomable indulgence of James, he would probably have shared the fate of that great minister, Wolsey, to whom he has been sometimes compared. During the progress of the Spanish treaty, as we have already seen, the Marquis of Inojosa had been sent to England as ambassador. He was a man of truly Spanish gravity and severity, and a great promoter of the Popish interests in England. His peculiar distinctions as an ambassador were, however, his disagreeable, discourteous manners, which marked him as one of the most unamiable foreigners that had visited the English Court.

This nobleman, in a private audience with James, had, in the spring of 1624, accused Buckingham of conspiring with certain accomplices how to break off the match with the Infanta, and of having determined, in case that their plot should not succeed, to send the King to one of his country houses, and to put all public matters in the hands of the Prince, whose virtue and discretion were so much worthier of confidence.

Hints were even thrown out by Inojosa that Buckingham plotted treason against the King, who, until assured by several peers and councillors that there was no intention of deposing him, was greatly disquieted. Precedents were now sought to punish Buckingham; and there was an idea

started of calling him before the upper house to answer for his conduct. But when the council talked to the King of precedents, he said that "such precedents were found to cut off his mother's head." Inojosa did his best, meantime, to obtain a private hearing from the King, and went to him, whilst Charles was in the House of Lords, at Theobald's; but the Prince, hearing of this visit, hurriedly rose, and arrived at the Palace before the ambassador.

The King, harassed and vacillating, sent for the Lords to Whitehall, and harangued them, when a strange scene ensued; he told them that he came to sing a psalm of mercy and justice about the Lord Treasurer,²⁴ whose misdeeds had lately come to light—who had done him, he said, some good, in restraining grants which his own facile disposition led him to consent to; that a recent imposition on wines was for his service and profit, and therefore they might as well arraign him as the Lord Treasurer. Prince Charles, deputed by the lords, said Lord Middlesex was not questioned for that; but the King "*told him he lied*," and bade the house proceed, but give a good account of what they did.²⁵

James next did what every open nature is

²⁴ Lord Middlesex.

²⁵ State Papers, vol. clxiv., No. 53.

likely to suggest ; he sent for the creature whom he had raised from the dust, and reproached him with his conduct. "Ah, Steenie, Steenie," cried the monarch, "wilt thou kill me ?" Steenie, however, found means to justify himself to the King's satisfaction, and the Marquis of Inojosa was henceforth prohibited from any more private interviews with the King. He resolved, however, to overreach those who were set as spies to prevent his seeing James ; and, whilst Don Carlos de Coloma held the Prince and the Duke in close conversation, he managed to slip into the King's hands, with a wink, a paper which he wished him to see, and made a sign that His Majesty should thrust it into his pocket, which was quietly effected by the poor frightened monarch. James had, indeed, for some time perceived that he was maltreated by the haughty Buckingham. The Prince, though averse to the alliance with Spain, was gentle and tractable ; but, in the Duke, the King declared that he had noted a turbulent spirit of late, and knew not how to quell it. It was by the altered expression of James's countenance, and by his frequent silence and musings, that the Duke and the Prince discovered these proceedings, and when they heard that Inojosa and the Jesuit Maestro had been with the King, their alarm was considerable. In consequence of this

discovery, Buckingham wrote to his royal master the following ungrateful and unpardonable letter:—

“DEAR DAD AND GOSSIP,

“Notwithstanding this unfavourable interpretation I find made of a thoughtful and loyal heart, in calling my words ‘cruel Catonic words,’ in obedience to your commands, I will tell the House of Parliament that you, having been upon the fields this afternoon, have taken such a fierce rheum and cough, as, not knowing how you will be this night, you are not able yet to appoint them a day of hearing; but I will forbear to tell them that notwithstanding of your cold, you were able to speak with the King of Spain’s instruments, though not with your own subjects. All I can say is, you march slowly towards your own safety (here the words ‘and happiness’ are erased), and those that depend of you. I pray God at last you may attain wit, otherwise I shall take little comfort in wife or child, though now I am suspected to look more to the rising son than to my maker. Sir, hitherto, I have tied myself to a punctuall answer of yours. If I should give myself leave to speak my own thoughts, they are so many, that though the quality of them should not grieve you, coming from one you wilfully and unjustly suspect, yet the

number of them are so many, that I should not give over till I had troubled you. Therefore I shall only tie myself to that which shall be my last and speedy refuge—to pray the Almighty to increase your joys and qualify the sorrows of your Majesty."

Notwithstanding this remonstrance, James continued to give audience to the Spanish ambassadors, though sometimes disputes ran high, and loud expostulations were addressed even to his Majesty by Inojosa; at other times, the Pope's envoy, the Jesuit Maestro, was admitted whilst Buckingham was at Newhall, and jealousies were thus fomented.²⁶ The Duke was about this time ill of fever and jaundice; and reports were spread of his having had something given to him in Spain that was undermining his health; he was, in short, harassed by debts, harassed by the Spanish treaty, and doubted by the King. Superstitious fears never seemed to have had much hold on him; yet in James's time, wiser men than Buckingham (not to specify the King himself) were agitated by omens and prophecies. In the spring of this eventful year, one Gamaliel Gruys had prophesied that two great cedars would fall in England; these were, he said, the Duke of Buckingham and the Lord Keeper. An hour after this

prophecy was spoken, news arrived of the death of the Duke of Lennox. The augury, therefore, might be thought to refer to him. This idle speech was deemed worthy of investigation;²⁷ and the prognostic was judged by many to have had special reference to the events which time too surely disclosed. Nevertheless, in proportion as the favour of the Monarch declined, that of the people seemed to be restored to the Duke.

The King, at this epoch, must have had some difficulties in arranging his different audiences. The ambassadors from the States, and those from Spain, were obliged to be conducted by different ways to the presence chamber, that they might not meet, and the very chamber and bed which had been prepared for the reception of the Infanta at St. James's, were allotted to Count Mansfeld, the ambassador from the Protestant party in Germany, who, notwithstanding a protest from the Spanish ambassador, was graciously received, and royally entertained by the King.²⁸ James found it impossible long to resist the influence of his favourite, and accordingly the Duke soon perceived that he was again welcome at court; and a complete triumph was gained. Thus dishonourably and discourteously

²⁷ State Papers, vol. clix., Nos. 45, 46.

²⁸ Nichols, 790.

ended the famous treaty with Spain, for the accomplishment of which James had risked the best interests in Europe, and of his own family, and upon which so much time, trouble, and money had been expended. The voice of the people certainly called for the result.

The expected rupture of the treaties with Spain was, however, most acceptable to the nation; and Parliament resolved to assist His Majesty in maintaining the honour of the nation by proclaiming war. Sir Edward Coke encouraged the resolution, by saying in the house that "we never thrived so well as in a war with Spain; and that if the navy was ready, Ireland secured, and the low countries divided, we need fear neither Turk, Pope, devil, nor the King of Spain himself, and that the very idea of the war made him seven years younger."²⁹ Sir Thomas Edwards was authorized to declare also that the Prince "was sensible to the dishonours put on himself, and condescended to urge speed in the resolution for avenging them." "Who," cried the well-paid courtier, "can resist such an invitation, the first made by him? He shall have an answer of thanks, and assurance of tender concern for his interests."³⁰

²⁹ State Papers, vol. clx., No. 63.

³⁰ Ibid., No. 68.

The King still temporized, nevertheless ; and his conduct at this juncture shows more plainly than at any other his native apathy, and the indecision of his weak character, faced, as it was, with strong pretensions. He was truly the “Clerk of Arms,” and said lofty things whilst the sword was still in the sheath. Prince Charles endeavoured to keep up appearances, by saying, “The King hath a long sword, and when it is out it will not easily go in again.” But James confessed, in his reply to the declaration, that he was old and oppressed with debts, and had not yet expressed his opinion with regard to the war ; “for, where Jupiter speaks,” he added, “he should have his thunder ; and a king should not speak unless he could act.”³¹ In this great business he must satisfy his conscience, and his honour and he were already *almost* resolved. The fact was, that he wanted larger subsidies than, he expected, without this coquetting with his Parliament, would be voted.

Never had the courtiers been so much at a loss in which way to turn their customary homage ; whether to the failing interest of the Spanish ambassador, or to the rising but precarious favour of the French, for James still vacillated.

At this juncture, the unfortunate Charles I. became for a time the darling of the anti-catholic

³¹ State Papers, No. 27.

party, by far the most powerful at all times in this country. His gentleness, his urbanity, his filial respect, on the one hand, his endeavours to procure the King's assent to the wishes of his people, on the other, were the theme of praise. Still Parliament was "fitful, and did little," though the Prince and Duke endeavoured to get it into a better understanding with His Majesty. The Prince so "bravely and judiciously" exhorted the Houses, that they resolved to offer life and fortune to His Majesty, if he would declare the treaties broken. Secretary Calvert knowingly suggested that the offer should be restricted "to be in a Parliamentary way;" the Treasurer and Lord Arundel suggested that a general offer of aid from Parliament would be of no avail; the Archbishop of Canterbury presented the declaration; the King replied by thanks for their "large offer, which, he said, was too general to be accepted;" they mistook him "in supposing that he said Spain had dealt falsely with him; but if they would give him five subsidies and ten fifteens for the war only, and one subsidy and two fifteens yearly for himself, till his debts were paid, he would issue a declaration to make this Parliament a session, and call another for Michaelmas, and another for Lady-day." This answer so annoyed the House that there was not one "God save the King" heard as they went away. When the

Houses met again, the Prince and Duke endeavoured to disperse these clouds: they said His Majesty was misunderstood; he only wanted six subsidies and twelve fifteenths for the war. But this did not convince those who heard him. Many members of Parliament were now again “so cast down, that they would give the King’s men all for the war, even to their shirts;” others harped on the poverty of the country, and would not consent to give at all. At last the house voted three subsidies and three fifteenths, to be paid within a year after the declaration that the treaties were broken, and the King “lovingly” accepted their offer, saying he would not touch a penny of the money himself, but devote it all to the Palatinate. The general joy was expressed in bonfires; and one nobleman, Lord Verulam, ran into debt to give four dozen fagots and twelve gallons of wine. Stones and firebrands were now thrown at the Spanish ambassador’s house; but the Commons refused to protect him. The ambassador complained of some expressions used by Buckingham, reflecting on the King of Spain, but the Houses immediately praised his conduct in Spain, and the King said the Duke “had set an ill example to ambassadors, for he had spent 40,000*l.* in his journey, and had asked no repayment.” Never, adds Sir Edward Conway, whose letter to Carleton contains these

curious details, “was man so beloved of King, Prince, and people” as Buckingham.

All seemed now to be settled according to the popular wish ; but those who deemed the rupture with Spain secure knew but little of King James. The motives for his perpetual vacillations seem inexplicable, unless we could believe that a sincere desire to preserve peace, and a dread of being involved in continental wars, may have influenced the now feeble and broken monarch. But sincerity was not one of this King’s attributes ; and his professions with regard to the Palatinate were utterly hollow and worthless.

Shortly after this apparent understanding with his Parliament, he “stormed” at a bill reviewing all the acts against Papists ; and even scolded Buckingham for consenting to it. At length, however, matters seemed to draw to a conclusion.

The Earl of Bristol was recalled ; Buckingham was empowered to read to the Houses a dispatch from the King of Spain, declaring that the treaties were dissolved. The King, in reply to an address from the Houses, protested that his heart bled at the increase of Popery ; and that he had desired to hinder it, not by persecution, for that would be useless ; nevertheless, he granted their desire for the banishment of priests and Jesuits ; and pro-

mised to advise with council about the probability of seizing subjects coming out from mass in the ambassador's chapel; no priests were in fact allowed to leave the kingdom without first taking the oaths of allegiance.

So far, all looked well for the Protestant party; but not long afterwards, the pertinacious Inojosa again seemed on the ascendant. He resolved to raise, through Padre Maestro, a discord between the King and Parliament, and, therefore, hinted to the King that there was a design to confine him in Theobald's, and to give the Crown to the Prince.³² The King was a good deal agitated, and told the Prince and the Duke of this suspicion. They were resolved to find out who had put this idea into the Spaniard's head—some Englishmen they believed had done it, and they suspected Lord Middlesex. James had heard of this design in the morning, but had kept it to himself until after dinner, when, with weeping eyes, in St. James's Park, he imparted it to Buckingham, who, in his reply, asked how it was possible he could ever do such a thing without the Prince's knowledge, whose filial feeling would rise against it; and without his knowledge it were sottish to plan it, for the affection of the people for His Majesty was such that they would tear anyone

³² State Papers, vol. clxiv., No. 10.—Locke to Carleton.

to pieces who attempted such baseness. To which the King replied, that had he believed it, he should never have mentioned it.³³ Eventually, Inojosa pretended that the accusation was a misunderstanding on the part of the King, and declared the Prince to be the most dutiful son, and the Duke to be the most faithful servant, that ever monarch had.³⁴

Meantime, the Earl of Bristol arrived in London, bringing with him the jewels that had been given to the Infanta. He was confined, by the King's order, to his house in St. Giles's Fields, but James sent him kind messages. "It is thought," writes Carleton, "that he will not be much questioned, lest he should reveal too much."

All hopes of now marrying the Prince to a lady of his own religion were at an end, for James would not consent to his son's espousing an inferior, and there seemed to be no other alternative than to make proposals to a French Princess. The Earl of Holland was therefore dispatched into France, to treat with the queen-mother and her ministers concerning this alliance, Charles, in the casual view which he had obtained of Henrietta Maria, the posthumous daughter of Henry the Great, having been struck by her beauty.

³³ State Papers, vol. clxiv., No. 12.

³⁴ Ibid, No. 44.

First it prospered, and the French ministers seemed disposed not to stand upon any conditions ; but when they found that the breach with Spain and that his inclinations favoured the negotiation ; that the breach with Spain was irreparable, and that a war was in preparation, they resolved to abate none of the terms which had been granted to the Spaniards, relative to the exercise of the Catholic religion, and to these terms James and his son consented. Such was the infatuation, and such, perhaps, the ignorance of the people, that, having in November, 1623, celebrated the dissolution of the Spanish treaty with bells and bonfires, they now, in February, signalized their joy at the conclusion of a treaty precisely similar. The conduct of Buckingham to the Earl of Bristol was justly and generally unpopular. That nobleman had prayed that he might make his answer in Parliament against any charge that might be preferred against him ; but had been committed to the Tower, in order, it was thought, to prevent disclosures, and was only released upon his making submission, and retiring into the country ; nevertheless, articles were prepared to impeach him.

In the course of the autumn, Don Hurtado de Mendoza, as ambassador extraordinary from the Court of Spain, arrived in England. This nobleman insisted on his right of precedence, according

to the English custom, which always grants it to the ambassador last arrived. This right was resisted by Inojosa, as being of higher rank in his own country, and he was eventually supported by the King of Spain, who ordered Mendoza back again, and commanded him to remain in his own house as a prisoner when he arrived in Spain.³⁵

During Mendoza's sojourn in London, Buckingham had given a great feast in his honour, and in that of Don Diego de Mexia, the Austrian ambassador. On this occasion, Inojosa, although of course expected, declined, not choosing, before the point of precedence was arranged, to walk after Mendoza. On the following evening, Buckingham sent the absent Inojosa, by Endymion Porter, a "regale of three large flaskets," full of the provisions of which the feast had been composed; one of cold meats for the *custe pasto*, "another filled with uncooked fowl, fat and ready for the spit;" a third containing the best and rarest sweetmeats; and with all these, this message,—"that the Duke kissed his hand, and would have esteemed it an honour and happiness to have had his company; but since he had not had it, begged him to taste of what he had provided for him; and on tasting this supper, entreated that the Marquis would be pleased to

³⁵ Note in Nichols, 937, from Finett's *Philoxenis*.

drink the health of the King of England, and he would, at the same time, drink that of the King of Spain."

Inojosa's immediate answer to this compliment was, "that if my Lord Duke had wished for his company, he might have had it, if it had pleased him to command it; adding that it was easy to conceive what the feast must have been, when a taste of it was so rare and plentiful." It was, indeed, one of those ruinous entertainments which were contributing to impoverish Buckingham. It cost three hundred pounds—a large sum in those days—and such was the taste and profusion of the times, that twelve pheasants were piled in a dish, and there were on the table forty dozen partridges, and all else in proportion.³⁶

These compliments had passed, of course, before the accusation which Inojosa had preferred against Buckingham had been insinuated into the mind of the King by secret and artful proceedings.

"And no wonder it was," Bishop Hacket remarks, "that His Majesty was abused awhile, and dim-sighted with the character of jealousy, for the Parliament was about to land him in a new world, to begin and maintain a war, who thought that scarce any mischief was so great as

* Letter from Chamberlain to Carleton, Nov. 21.

was worth a war to mend it; wherein the Prince did deviate from him, as likewise in affection to the Spanish alliance: but otherwise promised nothing but sweetness and obedience."

On the twenty-second of May, Buckingham came to Court, and was very welcome and well entertained, the King having previously shown him his continued favour by his determination to get York House, which Buckingham had hitherto borrowed, or rented, from Tobias Mathew, Archbishop of York, transferred to the Duke; and scarcely six weeks had elapsed, after the quarrel between James and his favourite, before we find that prelate writing a letter to the King, declaring that he will submit to His Majesty's wishes, and give up York House and other tenements; craving, however, that satisfaction to the see for so large a property should be cared for; Mathews adding that he "blessed God for a King who did not require anything from the church without making abundant recompense."³⁷ An act was subsequently passed, giving lands in Yorkshire to the Archbishop in lieu of York House, which Buckingham was altering at great expense. On giving his assent to the bill for the transfer of York House, the King vindicated himself, in his speech to the Lower House, from any design of allowing the

³⁷ State Papers, vol. clxvi., No. 62.

Archbishop of York to be a loser, and praised the care of the clergy taken by Buckingham, who was adding to the lands given in exchange a house fit for the bishop.³⁸ In another account it is said that the King spoke “very affectionately of Buckingham;” and on the fourteenth of June the Monarch granted to the Duke York House, and other messuages in the parish of St. Martin’s-in-the-Fields, formerly belonging to the Archbishop of York, but assigned to the King by act of Parliament. On the same day an annuity of a thousand a year from the Court of Wards was conferred also on the Duke, and a thousand pounds, arrears from the Court of Wards, in lieu of a like grant from the Exchequer, surrendered.³⁹ Thus it appears that Buckingham’s plan of managing his royal master, sometimes by flattery, sometimes by insolence, reaped an undeserved success. That the reconciliation was complete appears from the visit which James paid during the summer to Burleigh-on-the-Hill, still in an unfinished condition. Here the King witnessed the masque, by Jonson, entitled “Pan’s Anniversary, or the Shepherd’s Holiday,” containing those beautiful lines, beginning :—

³⁸ State Papers, vol. clxv., No. 29.

³⁹ Ibid, vol. clxix., No. 14.

“ Well done, my pretty ones, rain roses still,
Until the last be dropt, then hence, and fill
Your fragrant prickles ; “ for a second shower
Bring corn-flags, tulips, and Adonis flower,” &c.

Buckingham, however, did not accompany his royal master in this his last progress ; but, although his separations from the King and Court were more frequent than formerly, many letters from James to the Favourite, preserved among the Harleian manuscripts, sufficiently attest the unchanged character of the King’s devotion, not only to his favourite, but to his whole family.

“ Light open baskets for flowers, and still so called by gardeners.—Gifford’s Ben Jonson.



CHAPTER III.

DECLINE OF THE KING'S HEALTH—CASE OF LORD MIDDLESEX—PROCEEDINGS IN BOTH HOUSES—SIR EDWARD COKE'S EXAGGERATION—BUCKINGHAM'S PARTICIPATION IN THE AFFAIR—MIDDLESEX STEALS AWAY TO THEOBALD'S, AND IS FOLLOWED BY CHARLES—FOUND GUILTY—CONFINED—BUCKINGHAM'S DANGEROUS ILLNESS—ARTHUR BRETT—DEATH OF THE KING—ASCRIBED TO BUCKINGHAM.



CHAPTER III.

THE health of James the First had long been declining, and the vexations which troubled his last years contributed, it has been supposed, greatly to its decline. A mortal internal disease, however, aggravated by an attack of tertian ague, left, in the spring of the year 1625, little hope of his recovery. When told, during the access of this disorder, the proverb, that "ague in the spring was health to a king," he remarked that the saying was meant to apply to a young king. The King was, in truth, only fifty-eight years of age, but, independent of his originally feeble constitution, he, like other men in those times, was old of his age. It has been our blessing, under the improvements of science, and in the habits of the nineteenth century, to retain, if not youth, many of its greatest advantages, to a period of life far more

advanced than that in which James was styled the “old King,” a term to which he gave his mournful assent.

Amongst the numerous causes which, with the Spanish treaty, vexed the royal invalid, the case of the Lord Treasurer Middlesex was prominent. In this minister James had rested unbounded confidence, which nothing but the clearest evidence of the Lord Treasurer’s corruption could undermine.

In April, 1624, Middlesex had been questioned in the House of Lords on account of his neglect of the fortresses. He was much dejected by this attack; but the inquiry was ascribed to the jealousy of Buckingham, Lord Middlesex’s brother-in-law, Arthur Brett, having been put forward to supplant the Duke in James’s favour.⁴¹ It was thought, however, such was the low standard of public morality, that the articles produced against the Treasurer were not worse than “might be found in most men in his place;” and the attempts to injure him were referred rather to his harsh and insolent manner, his want of respect to Prince Charles, and his inclination to the Spanish match, than to his devices for raising money, and so impoverishing the nation, and to his opposition to the

⁴¹ State Papers, vol. clxii., No. 13.

calling a Parliament. Still he stood high in James's favour, and boldly declared his own innocence ; James, whatever he might really feel, "looking on" merely, and leaving his minister to his fate."⁴²

Buckingham, addressing the Peers, read a letter from the Deputy in Ireland, who complained of neglect to his applications for repairing the forts, which had become the more necessary as the Irish were in a state of tumult and rebellion. Prince Charles added that a "member of the council" had undertaken to answer these letters, and that this was the Lord Treasurer, "who used to put such letters in his pocket, under pretence of answering them." Middlesex was soon after suspended from his office, till he should clear himself ; and it was even reported that his title, given for services in the royal wardrobe, where he had been guilty of many abuses, would be taken away ; but rewards for services, acknowledged under the Great Seal, could not, it was found, be questioned. Even his life would have been in danger, could all have been proved against him.

The House, desirous to finish the matter, allowed Middlesex to produce forty witnesses, twelve of whom deposed directly against him ; upon this, Prince Charles sent him a message, order-

⁴² State Papers, clxi., No. 15.

ing him not to appear in the royal presence again until he had cleared himself. This command was the more necessary, since, at this very moment, the mind of James had been impressed by Inojosa with a suspicion that his son and the Duke were plotting against him ; an idea which the King, with weeping, imparted to his son and the Duke. "The Lord Treasurer," Sir Dudley Carleton writes, "is suspected to be at the bottom of it." Hitherto, James had still appeared confident of the Lord Treasurer's innocence,⁴³ and in a speech to the Lords, whom he had summoned to Whitehall,⁴⁴ he advised them as to their judgment. "Such a trial," he observed, "had no precedent before the last parliament, and then the guilty party, Lord Bacon, had confessed, now the supposed delinquent denied the charge." James, indeed, long clung to the Lord Treasurer, and told the lords he came to "sing a psalm of mercy and justice about him ;" still the trial went on, and the accused, in spite of alleged ill-health, was examined both morning and afternoon ; his illness was found, however, to be feigned ; and his answers were so audacious, and so manifestly perjured, that, had it not been for the intercession of the Prince, he would have been sent to the Tower. Among

⁴³ State Papers, clxiv., No. 12.

⁴⁴ May 5th, 1624.—State Papers.

other speeches, Middlesex said he had been baited by two mastiffs, Crew and the Attorney General; and he reasoned, in his defence, “saucily” for five hours, but was found guilty, and sentenced to pay 50,000*l.* fine, and to lose his office; never to sit in Parliament again, nor to come within the verge of the Court. “He would,” Mr. Chamberlain writes, “have been further degraded, but that he had great, if not *gratis*, friends in the bed-chamber. He may live to crush his enemies, if his brother-in-law, Brett, should get into favour and marry the Duchess of Richmond, who would do anything to be prime courtier again.”⁴⁵

Regarding this sentence, Lord Campbell remarks:—“The noble defendant had done various things, as head of the Treasury, which would now be considered very scandalous; but he had only imitated his predecessors, and was imitated by his successors.”—A melancholy commentary on the state of public morality. It must have been galling to Lord Bacon, in his retirement, to have known that he was coupled with a man so dishonest, so specious, and so degraded as Middlesex.

Whilst all this was taking place, Buckingham was dangerously ill; so that on Charles the difficult task of infusing a sense of justice into the mind

“ State Papers, clxiv., No. 86.

of James almost wholly devolved.⁴⁶ At length, however, irritated by the insolent bearing of Middlesex, who conducted himself as if he had not been expelled from Court, James, with his own hand, scratched out the culprit's name from the commission of subsidy for Middlesex; and sent, through Sir Richard Weston, a message, saying that, without regarding any other charge, he condemned him merely in his capacity as Master of the Wardrobe, which Middlesex had "treated as a fee-farm not to be accounted for, and would not even allow the clerk to keep accounts, whereby great corruptions arose, and ordinary and mean stuffs were brought in."⁴⁷

Whilst all this was going on, Arthur Brett, the supposed rival of Buckingham, was committed to the Fleet. By his examination it appears that, on the Duke's going into Spain, he had desired this young man to retire to France, and he did so; but on Buckingham's return, he could not obtain leave to come back to England, and had therefore left France without it. He was ordered back to France by the King; he pleaded his right to stay in his own country, as a free-born subject. Then he was told not to appear within forty miles of

⁴⁶ Parl. History, 1411, 1471.—See Lord Campbell, Article Coke.

⁴⁷ State Papers.

London. He had afterwards an interview with Buckingham, who blamed him for returning; but said he was the King's servant, and might live where he pleased. He had therefore staid in London, and wished to plead for a restoration of favour with the Duke; failing in this, he went to Wanstead to petition the King.⁴⁸

This disclosure of Brett's, and Buckingham's wish to keep him from the Court, certainly throw a doubt on the genuineness of the Duke's motives in the prosecution of Middlesex. Brett had imprudently met the King in Waltham Forest, and had seized hold of his Majesty's bridle and stirrup, a liberty which had greatly offended James, and to punish which Brett was sent to the Fleet Prison, and, though released, was heavily fined.

In the midst of these various harassing affairs, the illness of James began to assume a formidable appearance. The King had frequently, before his last illness, been heard to express his belief that he should not live long. He was a martyr to rheumatism and gout, which he increased by gross feeding, and the continual use of sweet wines. During the whole of the Christmas preceding his death he had kept his chambers, not even going to chapel, or to see the plays, although his known delight in Ben Jonson's masques would

⁴⁸ State Papers, vol. cxlii., Nos. 44, 54.

have induced him to attend the representation of the last of those performances played in his reign, the masque of the “Fortunate Isles.” The sole amusement which the dying King permitted himself was to go abroad in his litter, in fair weather, to see some flights at the brook; but all enjoyment of his usual diversion was at an end.

Accounts from the Court became daily worse:—“The King,” Chamberlain, on the twelfth of March, wrote to Carleton, “has a tertian ague, but not dangerous, if he would be governed by physicians.”⁴⁹ His Majesty’s decline was evidently gradual; nor was he the only person in the realm sinking under fever or ague, the “spotted fever”⁵⁰ being fearfully prevalent. Buckingham was now on the eve of going to France as ambassador, to marry by proxy the young Princess, Henrietta Maria; but so late as the twenty-third of March he was detained by the continued illness of James.

“The King’s fits,” Mr. Chamberlain again writes, “diminish; the Duke will not leave him till he is perfectly recovered, of which there is hope, but no assurance.” On the following day, we find, from the same source, that James performed

⁴⁹ State Papers, vol. clxxxv., No. 48.

⁵⁰ Probably typhoid, which is characterized by some spots. State Papers, vol. clxxxv., No. 99.

an act of mercy, almost if not quite his last, in excusing Lord Middlesex part of his fine, and reducing it from 50,000*l.* to 20,000*l.*, which sum was to be repaid to the Crown.

His sickness had now assumed a distinctly intermittent form ; even so late as the middle of the month there had been an apparent abatement ; on the sixteenth of March, he had his seventh fit of this debilitating disease ; but it was, as Mr. Secretary Conway informed the Earl of Carlisle, “less intense hereto than the rest, and left more clearness and cheerfulness in his looks than the former.”⁵¹ Yet, in the same letter, Conway speaks of the “double sadness of every face,” and alludes to the “extreme grief suffered for the sharp and smart accesses of His Majesty’s fever.”

During the last sufferings of King James, the marriage treaty with France was still diligently carried on, through the agency of Lord Carlisle, ambassador at Paris, and was only delayed on the ground that “it could not be suitable with the good nature of a son, in so dangerous a state of his father’s health, to entertain such jollity and triumph as duly belong to so acceptable a marriage.” The Duke of Buckingham, who had entertained some notion of going in person to Paris, and of concluding the treaty himself, di-

⁵¹ Hardwicke, State Papers, 562, 564.

rected Lord Carlisle, in a letter written on the fifteenth of March, "to have his eyes open, and to state any course, as much as he could, which might hinder the business of the Palatinate and of the religion," until he appeared in the French capital.

But the increasing illness of his royal master delayed the Duke's journey from day to day; and James was not permitted to witness the conclusion of the long-cherished hopes of the union of his son with a Princess of birth equal to his own. "All human things," wrote Conway, "have something of earth and defect." Nothing, he added in his letter to Lord Carlisle,⁵² could exceed the contentment of the "excellent Prince and gracious Duke," at the sure progress of the treaty, "and there was now no speech but of the speed of the Duke's going;"⁵³ but in the next letter the journey was spoken of as conditional upon the restoration of His Majesty to health. On the twenty-fourth of March, the tenth night of the King's fever arrived. The attack, as the same correspondent informed Lord Carlisle, "exercised much violence upon a weak body, which being so much reverenced, and loved with so much cause as His Majesty hath given, struck

⁵² Dated March 16, from Theobald's.

⁵³ Ibid, 563.

much sense and fear into the hearts of his servants that looked upon him." The King, it appeared, nevertheless, had that day slept well, "and taken broths." "And more to your comfort," added the secretary, "did, with life and cheerfulness, receive the sacrament in the presence of the Prince and Duke, and many others, and admitted many to take it with him; and in the action and the circumstances of it, did deliver himself so answerable to his writings and his wise and pious professions, and did justly produce much tears between comfort and grief; and now this day, and now this night, he recovers temper and gets, in appearance to us, strength, appetite, and digestion, which gives us great hope of his amendment, grounded not only upon desire, but upon the method of judicious observation."⁵⁴

It may here be remarked, before going more fully into the false and calumnious evidence of poison, afterwards brought forward in this case of the royal sufferer, that the state of the King, his relapses, and his rallyings, imply anything but poison, and convey an impression of a constitution long broken up, and suddenly depressed by the supervening of an accidental attack of a disease then extremely prevalent in this country. The Holy

⁵⁴ Letter of Conway to Lord Carlisle; dated March 16, from Theobald's, 566.

Communion was administered to James, over as before stated, four days before he died : of the King's professions before that last sacrament, an account, corresponding with that of Secretary Conway, but more distinct and instructive, is given by the Lord Keeper Williams. The monarch, who broke the heart of Arabella Stuart by long imprisonment and blighted hopes, and who beheaded Ralegh, and denied restitution to his son, Carew, died well ;—so self-deceived is the spirit of the “rich man,”—so easy is it to substitute professions for practical Christianity.

“Being asked,” said the Lord Keeper, “if he was prepared in point of faith and charity for so great a devotion, he said he was, and gave humble thanks to God for the same.” Being desired to declare his faith, he repeated the articles of the creed, one by one, and said, “He believed them all as they were received and expounded by that part of the Catholic church which was established here in England,” adding that whatever he had written of this faith in his life he was ready to seal with his death. Being questioned in “point of charity,” he answered that he forgave all men that had offended him, and wished to be forgiven by all whom he had offended. Being told that men in holy orders in the Church of England can challenge a power, as

inherent in their function, not in their power, to pronounce absolution on such of the penitent as do call on the same, and that they have a form of absolution in the Book of Common Prayer, he answered quickly :—

“I have ever believed that there was that power in you that be in orders in the Church of England, and that, amongst others, was to me an evident demonstration that the Church of England was the Church of Christ, and I, therefore, a miserable sinner, desire of Almighty God to absolve me of my sins, and that you, that are his servants in this high place, do afford me this heavenly comfort.” And, after that the absolution had been read, “he received the sacrament,” adds the Lord Keeper, “with that zeal and devotion as if he had not been a frail man, but a Cherubim clothed with flesh and blood.” He expressed to his son, and to the Duke, the inward comfort which he felt after receiving the Communion, and exclaimed “Oh, that my Lords would but do this when they were visited with the like sickness! Themselves would be more comforted in their souls, and the world less troubled with questioning their religion.”

Thus, in perfect composure, and sufficiently collected even to make his replies to the Lord Keeper in Latin, James met death. Whilst the

last hour was approaching, he was little aware that the two beings whom he most loved in the world, were, at that very moment, the objects of suspicions the most cruel and groundless.

At that period, throughout Europe, and "nowhere," says Lord Macaulay, "more than in England, the public, both high and low, were in the habit of ascribing the deaths of princes, and, indeed, of all persons of importance, to poison. Thus," he adds, "James the First had been accused of poisoning Prince Henry. Thus Charles had been accused of poisoning King James."⁵⁵

The calumnies, however, were not so distinctly directed to Charles, as to the Duke; the calumnies circulated respecting Buckingham assumed an importance, as they formed part of his subsequent impeachment. Those also which attempted to implicate Charles merit a reference, since they were repeated to his injury at a very critical period of his life, in 1642, when they were credited by many persons; for there exist those who will, on a party question, believe, or affect to believe, any absurdity.

An act of kindness on the part of Buckingham gave rise to the rumours to which some contemporary historians, and even an excellent writer of the present century, have attached an

⁵⁵ Macaulay, vol. i., p. 441.

almost incredible value.⁵⁶ Nothing, perhaps, can really be more unwise, or more unkind, than to interfere in illnesses with that profession which, admirable as are its practitioners, is remarkable for the tenacity of its etiquette, and its just horror of chance remedies. Yet, in other instances, even in the age of Sydenham and of Mead, Anne of Denmark had imprudently sent to Sir Walter Ralegh in the Tower for a remedy for her best beloved son, Henry, in his last agonies; and thus afforded Buckingham a precedent for his resort to unprescribed, and, therefore, often dangerous remedies.

The Countess of Buckingham, like many ladies of her own time and ours, had a specific which cured every known distemper; and which, at all events, was believed in by her son, the Duke; and it is not improbable that during his own frequent illnesses and attacks of ague he might have resorted to it himself.

Six days before the King died, the Duke applied, as it is stated by several historians, plasters to the wrists and body of the sufferer, and also administered several drinks, although some of the

⁵⁶ Weldon, in James's time, which, in a writer wholly without principle, is not surprising, attaches guilt to Buckingham in this case; but that Brodie should credit the slanderous statement against Charles and the Duke, seems to modern readers wonderful.

King's physicians did, says Roger Coke, "disallow thereof, and refused to meddle further with the King until the said plaisters were removed."⁵⁷

The King grew worse after these remedies, and great "droughts, raving, fainting, and an intermitting pulse followed thereupon." Twice was the drink given him by the Duke's own hand; and the third time refused. The physicians, to comfort the King, told him that the relapse was from cold, or from some other accidental cause. Upon which James answered, "No, no, it was that I had from Buckingham." "I confess," adds Coke, "that this was but a charge upon the Duke upon the Impeachment of the Commons" (in the next reign), "yet it was next to positive proof, for King Charles, rather than his charge should come to an issue, dissolved one Parliament."⁵⁸

It appears, however, that the plasters to which such dire consequences were ascribed, and which seem to have been suggested by the Countess of Buckingham, were prepared by an able and honest physician, Dr. John Remington, of Dunmow, in Essex;⁵⁹ and that he had often applied similar ones with success. One error was in supposing that a remedy suited to one case had

⁵⁷ Coke's *Detection*, vol. i., p. 126.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 177.

Fuller's *Church History*. b. x. p., 113.

an empirical virtue; another, in using it, without the knowledge of the physicians in attendance on the King. Their professional pride was, of course, justly irritated by the discovery; and one of them, Dr. Craig, having spoken "some plain words" on the matter, was ordered out of the Court, the Duke himself complaining to the King of what had been uttered.⁶⁰

His Majesty, however, grew worse and worse, so that Mr. Hayes, the Court surgeon, was called out of bed to take off the plasters; a julep was then prepared by Mr. Baker, the Duke of Buckingham's servant, for His Majesty to drink, and was administered by Buckingham himself.

These particulars were all given and sworn to by the physicians, two years afterwards, before a select committee of Parliament, when the Duke's act was voted "transcendant presumption," though most people thought that it was done without any ill intention.⁶¹

Whilst the poor King lay expiring, a strange and scandalous scene, according to Weldon, passed near his death-bed. Buckingham was coming into the chamber, when one of the servants greeted him with these words:—"Ah! my lord, you have undone all us poor servants, though you are so

⁶⁰ Nichols.—From Harleian MSS., 389.

⁶¹ Ibid.

well provided for you need not care :" upon which the Duke kicked him. The man, enraged, caught hold of the foot which spurned him, and the Duke fell to the ground. On arising, he ran to the King's bedside, and exclaimed, "Justice, for I am an abused man." At which James is said to have fixed his eyes mournfully upon him, "as one who would have said, 'not wrongfully.'"⁶²

Such were the unwarrantable and malignant reports which strove to impute to Buckingham the foulest treachery and the deepest ingratitude.

The motive for such an action as that which his foes scrupled not to fasten upon him—and the imputation followed him through life—is difficult to be discovered. Buckingham had no reason to wish for the death of his benefactor. Loaded with obligations, omnipotent in the country, feared, if not respected, abroad, for what purpose he should destroy the source of all his superabundant blessings, it were impossible to divine. The sole reason that could be given was a fear lest the King should promote the Earl of Bristol, and grow weary of the Duke. Yet Bristol was even then in retirement and disfavour, and had only recently been in a sort of imprisonment. The charge, cruel and groundless,

⁶² Weldon, p. 39.

tends to justify Buckingham from many minor imputations, since those who could fabricate such an accusation were not likely to be fair interpreters of his ordinary conduct. Roger Coke, for instance, as we have seen, specifies the charge against Buckingham, but gives him no credit for the actual acquittal of Parliament, and is silent regarding the general opinion.

The confidence reposed by Charles in Buckingham affords another source of vindication. Charles had ever been a dutiful son; indulged, indeed, to excess, yet not spoiled by kindness. On the Friday before the King died, he had three hours private conversation with his son. Had James then entertained any suspicion of the Duke, he would, assuredly, have imparted it as a matter which lay most heavily on his mind, and, as a precaution to his son, James could not have controlled a grief so pungent as the suspicion that his favourite, the being, perhaps, the best beloved in the world, had dealt out to him the potion of death. Wilson, indeed, relates the circumstance of this last interview thus.

The King, according to his account, sent for the Prince out of his bed. Charles appeared before him; when James, arousing all his strength and energy, strove to address him; “but nature being exhausted, he had not strength to express

his intentions." That a conversation did, however, take place, rests on the testimony of a private letter addressed by Mr. Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, and written shortly after the King's death.⁶³

There was among the Court physicians, one named Eglesham, who had acted in that capacity for ten years; and this long attendance, in a responsible post, has been thought a sufficient guarantee for his character. Upon his evidence, chiefly, the charge against Buckingham rested; Eglesham was obliged, in consequence of his allegations against the Duke, to abscond, and remain some years absent from the country. In the pamphlet which he published, he stated that the plaster was applied to the King's heart and chest whilst the physicians in attendance were absent at dinner: the King, after this application, which was suggested and carried into execution by the Countess of Buckingham, became faint, and was in great agony. Some of the physicians, returning after dinner, and perceiving an offensive smell from the plaster, exclaimed that the King was poisoned, and then Buckingham, entering, commanded the physicians to leave the room, sent one of them a prisoner to his own chamber, and ordered another

⁶³ Brodie's Cor. Hist., vol. ii., p. 128, note.

out of the Court ; whilst his mother, kneeling down, cried out to the King, with a brazen face, “ Justice, sire, I demand justice ! ” His Majesty asked her “ Justice for what ? ” “ For that which their lives are nowise sufficient to satisfy ; for having said that I have poisoned your Majesty.” “ Poisoned me ! ” cried James, and, turning round, fainted away. On the following Sunday, Buckingham entreated two physicians who attended the King to sign a document, declaring that the powder he had given to the King was a safe and good remedy ; this they refused to do.

After the King’s death, the physician who had been commanded to keep within his own apartment was set at liberty, with a caution “ to hold his peace,” and the others were threatened, if they kept not “ good tongues in their heads.”⁶⁴ The public were also horrified at hearing that the King’s body and head had swelled beyond measure ; but that is by no means an unusual symptom after death.

Now the value of Eglesham’s evidence rests wholly upon his personal credit. It was stated, by Sanderson the historian, that he afterwards offered to write a recantation of his pamphlet for four hundred guineas ;⁶⁵ but although Brodie does

⁶⁴ Brodie’s Cor. Hist., vol. ii., p. 128, note.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 119.

not consider the assertion of Sanderson, who had the statement direct from Sir Balthazar Gerbier, to be a good authority, the impression which it conveys against Eglesham is confirmed from another source. There is a letter in the State Paper Office, from one Andrew Herriott to Secretary Nicholas, in which "he marvels that Nicholas and Sir James Bagg should take into their protection Edward Yeates, who was a pirate with one Captain Herriott, a poor man's son in Kent, a mere mountebank, only companion with Dr. Eglesham, at bed and board for many years together, insomuch as they coined many double pistolets, and yet unhang'd."⁶⁶ This letter was written in 1627, two years after the King's death; when Eglesham, probably from a fear of justice, had fled from Court, after he had lost the protection of the King, who was by no means scrupulous as to the character of those around him.

On Eglesham, it appears, it devolved to examine the corpse, and he did not hesitate to point to Buckingham as the King's murderer.⁶⁷

He afterwards presented petitions both to the King and the Parliament, praying for vengeance

⁶⁶ Letter from Andrew Herriott to Nicholas, State Papers. Calendar, by Mr. Bruce, vol. xliv., No. 27, dated May 27, 1627.

⁶⁷ Oldmixon, 70.

on the Duke. These petitions were published in the form of a pamphlet in Latin, in 1626 ; and in 1640 the English translation was printed.⁶⁸ In this pamphlet, Eglesham stated that his motives for the publication were these : that having been patronized from his youth by the Marquis of Hamilton, the probability there was of that nobleman's being poisoned was mentioned to him ; he then stated that about the time of the Duke of Richmond's death, a list of persons who were to be poisoned was found in King's Street, Westminster, and brought to the Marquis of Hamilton by a relation, a daughter of Lord Oldbarre ; in this list was not only Hamilton's name specified, but also that of Dr. Eglesham "to embalm him." Other titles were contained in the list ; those of the Duke of Lennox and his brother, and the Earl of Southampton, who died at this time of a fever, being particularized. These accusations of Eglesham's, who was doubtless only a tool in the hands of a party, were, according to Arthur Wilson, hushed up, but they served the purpose of those by whom they were originated. According to the account of those historians who have delighted to blacken

⁶⁸ The Harleian MSS., 405. It was revived by the disaffected in 1642, with some alteration of language.—Nichols, 41033.

Buckingham, James foresaw his doom, and hinted at the probability of treachery, when, on hearing of the Marquis of Hamilton's death, he said—"If the branches are thus cut off, the stock cannot continue long ;" and often was he heard, according to Sir Anthony Weldon, to say, in his last illness, to the Earl of Montgomery, "For God's sake, see that I have fair play."⁶⁹

Of this improbable story, there is not a hint in any of the correspondence of the day, although the circumstances of the King's death are carefully detailed by Chamberlain and other newswriters.

After his last interview with Charles, the King declined rapidly ; and his tongue was so swollen, that he could either not speak at all, or not be understood. An hour before the King's death, the Dean of Hereford, Dr. Daniel Price, preached before the Prince and Court at Theobald's ; he prayed earnestly for the King before the sermon, and wept as he prayed and preached.⁷⁰

James expired on Sunday, the 27th of March, between the hours of eleven and twelve, aged fifty-seven years and three months. Upon the examination of his remains, much internal disease was found, but no appearance of poison. His

⁶⁹ Oldmixon, 70.—From Wilson and Weldon.

⁷⁰ Nichols, 1032.

heart was unusually large, which accounted, in the opinion of Sir Symonds D'Ewes, for his being "so very considerate, so extraordinary fearful, which hindered him from attempting any great action."⁷¹

During the Monarch's last hours, prayers were multiplied more and more for the benefit of his soul, and certain English and Latin short sentences of devotion, to elevate his spirit to heaven "before it came thither," were recited. James, whose consciousness and memory continued unimpaired, was so "ravished and solaced" by these religious ejaculations, that his groans of agony were stilled whilst they were uttered. "To one of these," says the Lord Keeper Williams, "Mecum eris in Paradiso," he replied presently, "Vox Christi"—that it was the voice and promise of Christ. Another, "Veni, Domine Jesu, veni cito," he twice or thrice articulated. And as his end drew near, that prayer usually said at the hour of death was repeated. And no sooner had that prayer been uttered, "In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum," than, without any convulsion or pangs, he expired,—his son and servants kneeling on one side the bed, his archbishops, bishops, and all his chaplains on the other.

⁷¹ Nichols, 1054.

Thus closed the responsible career of the first of the Stuart Kings that had ascended the throne of England.

Immediately after the King's last sigh was breathed, a letter, not official, was written by one of his household, without a name, to the Queen of Bohemia. It is among the foreign inedited papers in the State Paper Office; and contains, which is remarkable, since it appears to be written in strict confidence, no allusion whatever to the suspicion of poisoning.⁷²

⁷² See Inedited State Papers. Foreign, for 1625.

CHAPTER IV.

1624—1625.

THE REMARKS OF SIR HENRY WOTTON UPON BUCKINGHAM'S UNINTERRUPTED PROSPERITY DURING THE REIGN OF JAMES—HIS MOST PERILOUS TIME YET TO COME—THE CHARACTER OF CHARLES DIFFICULT TO MANAGE—HIS AFFECTIONS DIVIDED—REQUEST OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL REGARDING THE LATE KING'S FUNERAL AND THE YOUNG KING'S MARRIAGE—GOOD TASTE DISPLAYED BY CHARLES IN HIS CONDUCT AT THE FUNERAL—THE INFLUENCE OF BUCKINGHAM STILL PARAMOUNT—ROGER COKE'S REMARK UPON KING JAMES'S REGRET ON OBSERVING THAT HIS SON WAS OVERRULED BY THE DUKE—THE THREE GREAT KINGDOMS OF EUROPE AT THIS PERIOD RULED BY FAVOURITES—THE MARRIAGE OF CHARLES AND HENRIETTA MARIA—MOTIVE ATTRIBUTED TO BUCKINGHAM — PRELIMINARY STEPS — LETTER FROM LORD KENSINGTON TO THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM DETAILING HIS INTERVIEW WITH THE QUEEN-MOTHER — DESCRIPTION OF THE YOUNG PRINCESS—THE DUKE PREPARES FOR HIS JOURNEY INTO FRANCE TO FETCH

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CHAPTER IV.

1624—1625.

IT is remarked by Sir Henry Wotton, that “a long course of calm and smooth prosperity” had been enjoyed by the Duke of Buckingham under the sway of James I. “I mean,” adds that writer, “long for the ordinary life of favour, and the more notable, because it had been without any visible eclipse or wane in himself, amid divers variations in others.”

Villiers had witnessed the disgrace of Somerset, the degradation of Bacon, the execution of Ralegh, the fall of Coke, without experiencing, in his own fortunes, any symptoms of decline, or knowing more than a temporary displeasure towards himself in the mind of his sovereign.

But the more perilous part of his career was yet to come; when he had to deal with a young prince, whose affections were not undivided, but

were liable to an influence foreign to that of his early friend and companion in travel. He had to contend with a character full of generous impulses, but strongly marked by obstinacy in some points, and by weakness of purpose in others. He had also to contend with the future bride of his enamoured sovereign, and that bride a woman of no ordinary determination, and of a sagacity sufficient, if not to guide her right, fully to comprehend the assailable points in the conduct of another.

It was soon remarked that the influence which had predominated during the last reign was hereafter to prevail; for Charles, as an historian remarks, had been linked to the Duke of Buckingham in his father's life-time, "and now continued to receive him into an admired intimacy and dearness, making him partake of all his counsels and cares, and chief conductor of his affairs; an example rare in this country, to be the favourite of two succeeding princes."⁷³

According to another writer, James had perceived with sorrow the sway obtained by Buckingham over Charles. "Before he died," thus writes Roger Coke, "he saw his son overruled by his favourite, against his determinate will and pleasure, and the Prince's own honour and

* Rushworth, vol. i., p. 167.

interest, which was a great mortification to him, and which he often complained of, but had not courage to redress.”⁷⁴ To this influence, Coke attributed all the internal feuds, jealousies, and discords of the nation, and the fatal catastrophe which closed both the career of the Favourite and that of his royal master.

It was a singular coincidence that the three great kingdoms of Europe were governed at this time by young Kings, or rather, virtually, by their favourites. France, in the reign of Louis the XIII., was governed by Richelieu; Spain, in that of Philip the IV., by Olivares; England by Buckingham; “and this,” adds the same historian, “Europe reckoned in those times amidst its unhappy destiny.” Immediately after the funeral of the late king, the marriage of Charles to Henrietta Maria—a union fraught with evils eventually, and replete with early discomfort—was eagerly anticipated both by the Monarch and his favourite. The impatience of Charles to welcome the young Princess as his bride was ascribed to the favourable impression which her youthful loveliness had produced upon his imagination, when he had seen her himself, incognito, two years previously in passing through Paris. But when it is remembered that, after

⁷⁴ Coke’s Detection, vol. i., p. 182.

that brief interview, he had been enamoured of the loving Infanta, it will be readily supposed that the influence of persuasion was employed in advancing this ill-starred marriage. It was attributed, indeed, to the rivalry and hatred between Buckingham and Olivares, which had succeeded their professions of amity, and to the eager desire for an alliance with France, England being during the first fifteen years of Charles's reign, as Coke expressed it, "perfectly French."

"The Spanish wooing," observes Miss Strickland, "certainly smoothed the way for the marriage of Charles and Henrietta. It had accustomed the English people to the idea of a Catholic Queen."⁷⁵ The prepossessions of the party mainly interested in the match might indeed easily be gained over by the reputed graces and acquirements of the French Princess. Inheriting from her mother's family a taste for the fine arts, Henrietta's musical acquirements were considerable. Her voice was by nature so sweet and powerful, that if she had not been a queen, she might have been, as Disraeli observes, "Prima Donna of Europe." She had learned to dance with grace, and became, even during her childhood, a frequent performer in the court ballets, which, with other displays and festivities, are said to have interrupted the education

⁷⁵ Lives of the Queens of England, vol. viii., p. 13.

of the young Princess, and to have prevented her from receiving a solid course of instruction.

Two noblemen, one of them the peculiar favourite and creature of the Duke of Buckingham, had been sent during the previous year to negotiate the marriage. Of these the most able and least scrupulous was Henry Rich, created first Baron Kensington, and afterwards Earl of Holland, who is described as having been of a lovely and winning presence, and of gentle conversation. The younger son of a noble house, the obloquy which was attached to his birth, which was supposed to be illegitimate,⁷⁶ had kept Rich, in early life, humble. He had adopted the profession of arms, and made several campaigns in the Low Countries. Happening, as was the custom of English volunteers, to visit England during the winter, the youth had been introduced at the Court of James in the dawn of Buckingham's favour. He shortly made himself acceptable to the Favourite, for he was subtle, discerning and artful. He soon, therefore, laid aside all thoughts of becoming a soldier, but took every means of endearing himself to Buckingham, carefully avoiding all suspicion that the King had any kindness for him, but appearing to rest solely upon the

⁷⁶ His mother, the Countess of Warwick, lived for some time with, and afterwards married, the Earl of Devonshire.

Favourite, "whose creature" he desired to be considered; "and he prospered," remarks Lord Clarendon, "so well in that pretence, that the King scarcely made more haste to absolve the debt, than the Duke did to promote the other."⁷⁷ Under such auspices, the Earl of Holland had risen soon to greatness.

A wealthy marriage with the heiress of Sir Walter Coke brought him, among other sources of wealth, the Manor of Kensington, and made him the owner of Holland House, built by his father-in-law in 1607, but greatly enlarged and embellished. Through the influence of Buckingham, he had not only been created Baron of Kensington, but placed about the person of the Prince of Wales, a step of much hazard, as the Favourite was, at that time, scarcely certain of the favour of Charles to himself.⁷⁸ Holland was sent to Spain before the Prince and the Duke, so that he had acquired an insight, not only into the politics of that court, but into the character of those with whom he had to deal, whose foibles were, as he conceived, to contribute some of the stepping-stones to his own fortune.

The Earl of Holland had had," says Bishop

⁷⁷ On the 24th of September, 1624.—Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, vol. i., p. 61.

⁷⁸ Brydges's Peers of James I., p. 335. Also Clarendon, vol. i., p. 62.

Hacket, “an amorous temper and a wise head, and could court it as smoothly as any man with the French ladies ; and made so fortunate an account into England, after three months of his introductions, that he saw no fear of denial in the suit, nor of superiority in the articles.”⁷⁹ But James, wisely relying less upon the crafty arts of Holland, than upon the integrity of the Earl of Carlisle, had sent that nobleman afterwards, joining him in the same commission with Holland. “They were,” added Bishop Hacket, “peers of the best lustre in our court, elegant in their persons, habit, and language, and, by their nearness to King James, apt scholars to learn the principles of wisdom, and the fitter to improve their instructions to honour and safety.”⁸⁰

The Earl of Holland soon discovered that in the queen-mother, Marie de Medici, the widow of Henry the Great, alone centred the real sway in France at that period,⁸¹ unhappily for the young Prince, her son, who crouched beneath her rule and that of Richelieu. During frequent interviews at the Louvre, he gained from her a promise of assistance; this was even before the return of Charles and Buckingham from Spain, as the post-

⁷⁹ Life of Lord Keeper Williams, 209.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Cabala.—Letter from Lord Kensington to the Duke of Buckingham, vol. i., p. 286.

script of a letter from the Earl of Holland, lately created Earl of Kensington, dated Feb. 26, 1624, and addressed to Charles, certifies. "The obligations you have unto this young Queen (Anne of Austria) are strange, for with the same affections that the Queen, your sister, would do, she asks of you, with all the expressions that are possible of joy, for your safe return out of Spain, and told me that she durst say you were weary of being there, and so should she, though a Spaniard; though I find she gives over all thought of your alliance with her sister. Sir, you have the fortune to have respects put upon you unlooked for; for, as in Spain the Queen there did you good offices, so I find will this sweet Queen do, who said she was sorry when you saw them practise their masques, that madam, her sister⁸² (whom she dearly loves), was seen to so much disadvantage by you; to be seen afar off and in a dark room, whose person and face hath most loveliness to be considered nearly. She made me show her your picture, the which she let the ladies see, with infinite commendations of your person, saying she hoped some good occasion might bring you hither, that they might see you like yourself."⁸³

⁸² Henrietta Maria.

⁸³ Cabala.—Letter from Lord Kensington to the Prince
p. 287.

“The French match,” according to another eyewitness, “went on by fits;” the Earl of Carlisle growing so weary of frivolous objections and delays that he wished to return home. “The young lady,” adds the same informant, “is forward, and this week sent one over with her picture to the Prince, and where any rubb or slip comes in the way, she grows melancholique and keeps her chamber.”⁸⁴ Nevertheless, even in this early stage of the business, we find a letter from King James to the Duke of Buckingham, commanding him to put the royal navy into readiness “to bring over the Princess Henrietta.”⁸⁵

Shortly afterwards, Lord Kensington wrote again, giving Charles, whom he addresses as the “most complete young Prince and person in the world,” the flattering intelligence that the fair Henrietta had expressed a passionate desire to see his picture, “the shadow of that person so honoured,” yet knew not “the means,” adds the ambassador, “to compass it, it being worn about my neck; for though others, as the Queen and Princesses, would open it and consider it, which even brought forth admiration from them, yet durst not this poor young lady look any other-

“Mr. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton. State Paper Office. Dated 24th October, 1624.

“ State Paper Office. Dated Nov. 1, 1624.

wise on it than afar off, whose heart was nearer it than any of the others that did most gaze upon it." Resolved, however, to behold the portrait of her royal suitor, Henrietta desired the gentlewoman in whose house the ambassador was lodged, and who was a former servant of hers, to borrow the picture secretly, assigning as an excuse that "she could not want that curiosity, as well as others, towards a person of the Prince's infinite reputation." As soon as she saw her emissary enter her room, the Princess retired into her cabinet, calling her in, "where," says Holland, "she opened the picture in such haste as shewed a picture of her passion, blushing in the instant at her own guiltiness. She kept it an hour in her hands, and when she returned it she gave it many praises of your person." "Sir," continues the ambassador, well comprehending the gallant and delicate nature of him whom he addressed, "this is a business fit for your secrecy, as I know it shall never go farther than unto the King your father, my Lord of Buckingham, and my Lord of Carlisle's knowledge. A tenderness in this is honourable; for I would rather die a thousand times than it should be published, since I am by this young lady trusted, that is for beauty and goodness an angel."⁸⁶

* Cabala, vol. i., p. 288.

Amongst the most powerful advocates of Prince Charles in the French Court was the Duchess de Chevreuse, to whose influence over Anne of Austria has been attributed her subsequent imprudent encouragement of Buckingham's discreditable addresses.⁶⁷ Formerly the wife of the Duc de Luises, the favourite of Louis the Thirteenth, but married afterwards to the Duc de Chevreuse, a Prince of the House of Lorraine, the Duchess de Chevreuse became the great star of the gay and dissolute scenes in which the young Queen of France sought to bury the remembrance of a husband from whom she recoiled, and of a Queen-Mother and Minister of State whom she both disliked and feared. The Duchess, whose banishment from Court, sometime afterwards, was an event never forgiven by Anne of Austria, was one of the most splendid and lavish as well as the gayest and most fascinating women of her day. Lord Kensington, visiting her one evening at the Louvre, found her and the Duc de Chevreuse dressing themselves for a masque, and covered with such a profusion of jewels as even he never expected again to behold adorning subjects. Shortly afterwards, there entered Anne of Austria and Henrietta, the latter full of glee, of which, as many persons told the ambassador, "the cause

⁶⁷ *Memoires de Madame de Motteville*, vol. i., p. 21.

might easily be guessed." "My Lord," adds the Lord Kensington, addressing the Duke of Buckingham, "I protest to God she is a lovely, sweet young creature. Her growth is not great yet, but her shape is perfect; and they all swear that her sister, the Princess of Piedmont (who is now grown tall and a goodly lady), was not taller than she is at her age." He feared that Anne ever would be reserved towards him, not liking the "breach and disorder of the Spanish treaty;" but she had become, it was observed, "so truly French" as to wish for this alliance rather than that with her own sister, the Infanta of Spain.⁸⁸

Everything therefore proceeded favourably, and Henrietta passed hours in the society of Lord Kensington, expatiating upon the Prince, and touching upon English customs. Among other things, she "fell to speaking," says Lord Kensington, "of ladies riding on horseback, which, she said, was rare here, but frequent in England; and then expressed her delight in that exercise."⁸⁹

Lord Kensington continued, meantime, to ply the Queen Dowager with incessant flattery, and to meet her inquiries ingeniously. "I find," he writes to the Duke of Buckingham, "the queen-

⁸⁸ Cabala, 291.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

mother has the only power of governing in this state. She was willing to know upon what terms stood our Spanish alliance. I told her that their delays had been so tedious that they had sometimes discouraged the King, and had so wearied the Prince and state with the dilatory proceedings in it, as that treaty, I thought, would soon have an end." So little expectation was, at this time, entertained of an unfavourable termination of the Spanish marriage, that the Queen thought that the ambassador referred to a speedy union between Charles and the Infanta. "She strait said, 'Of marriage ?' taking it that way. I told her I believed the contrary, and I did so her entreat, because the Spanish ambassador hath given it out, since my coming, that the alliance is fully concluded, and that my journey hath no other end than to hasten his master unto it, only to give them jealousies of me, because he, at this time, fears their dispositions stand too well prepared to desire and affect a conjunction with us."⁹⁰

In another letter, also addressed to the Duke of Buckingham, it appears that Lord Kensington was allowed access at all times to the young French princess, with permission "to entertain her henceforth with a more free and amorous kind of language from the Prince ;" and these and

⁹⁰ Cabala, 286.

other favours were acknowledged by Kensington, as from the Duke of Buckingham, with redoubled thanks, adding that “he knew his lordship would esteem it one of the greatest happinesses that could befall him, to have any occasion offered whereby he might witness how much he adored Her Majesty’s royal virtues, and how infinitely he was her servant, ready to receive law from her, whensoever, by the least syllable of her blessed lips or pen, she should please to impose it.” And then followed encomiums in the same letter from the crafty Kensington, who, as he said, solved everything as well as he could, upon the Cardinal de Richelieu, magnifying to the Queen “the Cardinal’s wisdom, his courage, his courtesy, his fidelity to the service, his affection to our business,” so as to captivate the queen-mother.⁹¹

A long conversation followed regarding the voyage into Spain, upon which memorable event the queen-mother remarked “that two kings had committed in it two great errors; the one, in trusting so precious a pledge in so hazardous an enterprize; the other, in treating so brave a guest so ill.” “Indeed, I heard,” said the Queen, “that the Prince was used ill.” “So he was,” returned Lord Kensington, “but not in his entertainment, for that was as splendid as their country could

⁹¹ Ellis’s Original Letters, 2nd series, vol. iii., p. 199.

afford; but in their frivolous delay, and in the unreasonable conditions which they propounded."

"And yet, madam," added the wily ambassador, "you here use him far worse." "And how?" inquired the queen-mother; "In that you press," replied he, "upon that noble and worthy Prince, who hath, with so much affection to your Majesty's service, with so much passion to Madam, sought this alliance, the same, nay, more unreasonable conditions than the other, and what they traced out for the breaking of the match, you follow, pretending to conclude it," alluding to one of the conditions of the marriage contract. Lord Kensington then requested a personal interview with the young Princess, in order to deliver to her a message from Charles. After some little difficulty, his petition was granted; the queen-mother, relying, as she said, upon his discretion not to utter anything which it might be derogatory to her daughter's dignity to hear. It was, of course, the endeavour of the ambassador to put the Prince's addresses in the light of a passionate love-suit. "I obey," said he, "the Prince's commands in presenting to your Highness his service, not by way of compliment, but out of passion and affection, which both your outward and inward beauties, the virtues of your mind, so kindle in him that he was resolved to contribute the utmost

he could to the alliance in question," with some little other "such amorous language." Then, turning to the old ladies who stood near the Princess, he thought it fit to let them know that his Highness had the Princess's picture, which he kept in his cabinet, "and fed his eyes many times with the sight and contemplation of it, since he could not have the happiness of beholding her person." All which, and many other such speeches, were by the Princess, "standing by, quickly taken up, without letting any one fall to the ground."⁹²

Such were the addresses of Charles to Henrietta. Buckingham, to whom this account was written by Lord Kensington, must have smiled at the repetition of the same love passages that had, it was said, fascinated the heart of the Infanta.

In a subsequent letter to Charles himself, Kensington again exalted the services of the queen-mother in promoting this match, and extolled the charms of the Princess. "There is no preparation, I find, towards this business, but by her —the queen-mother; and all persuasions of amity made light that look not towards this errand; and, sir, if your intentions proceed this way, as, by

⁹² Letter from Lord Kensington to the Duke of Buckingham.—Ellis's Original Letters, 3rd series, vol. iii., p. 169; also, Cabala, p. 294.

many reasons of state and wisdom, there is cause now rather to press it than slacken it, you will find a lady of as much loveliness and sweetness to deserve your affection as any creature under heaven can do." The "impressions he had of her," he adds, "were but ordinary, but the amazement extraordinary, to find her, as I protest to God I did, the sweetest creature in France. Her growth is very little short of her age, and her wisdom infinitely beyond it. I heard her discourse with her mother and the ladies about her with extraordinary discretion and quickness. She dances, which I am a witness of, as well as ever I saw any creature. They say she sings most sweetly; I am sure she looks so." In conclusion, Kensington mentions to His Highness that, in his letter to "my Lord of Buckingham," he had written a more large discourse upon this interesting theme.⁹³

Thus far had the treaty proceeded, when it was delayed by the death of King James. The marriage articles had, nevertheless, been subscribed by that Monarch on the 11th of May, and by the King of France on the 13th of August, in the previous year; and, on the 13th of March, 1625, the Earls of Carlisle and Kensington signed these articles on the part of Charles I. Private arrangements received also their signature

⁹³ Cabala, p. 1287. This letter is dated Feb. 26, 1624.

relative to the toleration of Catholics within the British dominions.

The dispensation for the nuptials having arrived from Rome in the beginning of May, there remained no obstacle to the ceremonial of marriage. This, notwithstanding the claim preferred by the Archbishop of Paris to that honour, was performed by Cardinal Richelieu. The marriage was celebrated according to the usual rites of the Church of Rome. After the ceremony, the whole procession, including the royal personages, entered the church of Notre Dame, the Duke de Chevreuse and the Princess Henrietta Maria taking precedence of the King and Queen. Then mass was said, the English ambassadors retiring to the Bishop's house during the recital.⁹⁴

A banquet followed, and the event was commemorated by the release of criminals, "as an earnest of the King's love and respect for his sister."⁹⁵ The previous arrangements for these ceremonials had been delayed by much contention with regard to precedence.⁹⁶ But that which gave the greatest uneasiness to the English nation

⁹⁴ Rushworth's Collection, p. 169.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ According to one account, the Duke of Anjou, the brother of Henrietta, was proxy for the King of England.—See Mr. Mead's Letter to Sir Martin Stuteville, April 30; Ellis's Letters, 1st series, p. 190. 1625.

was the difficulty, and, as it seemed to many, the risk attendant upon the mode of faith professed by the young Queen.

At his accession, Charles had manifested very decisively his disfavour of Catholics; he declared his intention to reform the Court, “as of unnecessary charges, so of recusant Papists.” He gave an order in his own hand-writing that no recusant Papist, of any rank whatsoever, should be presented with mourning for the late King; and he showed his zeal generally for the observance of the Church, by putting the High Sheriff of Nottingham out of his commission, for accompanying the judges on the circuit, who were attending the sermon, only to the church door, and there leaving them.⁹⁷ Hopes were entertained that Henrietta Maria might be converted, and several prayer-books in French were sent her by Sir George Goring for that end; but the news that a bishop and twenty-eight priests were to be included in her retinue, quickly dispelled that pleasing anticipation.⁹⁸

The part which Buckingham took in the promotion of this alliance lessened, therefore, greatly the popularity which his abandonment of the Spanish marriage was beginning to ensure to him;

⁹⁷ Ellis's Letters, vol. iii., p. 187.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

and the announcement of the King's intention to despatch the Favourite, in order to bring off his royal bride, was, for many reasons, highly displeasing to the country.

The chief ground of objection to the proposed journey was the expense. And here the nation separated the wishes and intentions of Charles from those of his minister. The King had, they observed, shown a disposition to economy; nay, more, he had displayed an honourable determination to pay his late father's debts by disparking most of his remote parks and chases, which were then more numerous and extensive than any royal domains in Europe.⁹⁹ The lavish tendencies of Buckingham, therefore, and the heavy charges on the exchequer which had been incurred by the two ambassadors already at the French court, were not ascribed to the extravagance of the Monarch, but to the vanity and profuseness of his Minister.

The preparations, therefore, made by Buckingham for this, his last foreign mission,—for, when he again visited the continent, it was with different intentions, and under another aspect,—were viewed with vexation, by the majority of those who were not bound to silence by interest,

⁹⁹ Ellis's Letters, vol. iii., p. 187.

for the great and fruitless cost of the Spanish journey was fresh in remembrance.

The Duke had, however, begun his arrangements before King James's death: and the day¹ had been fixed for his departure. He did not forget that he was to appear at the most festive and splendid of all the courts of Christendom.²

An account, preserved in the Harleian Manuscripts, represents him as having, "for his body, twenty-seven rich suits, embroidered and laced with silk and silver plushes, besides one rich satten uncut velvet suit, set all over, both suite and cloak, of diamonds, the value whereof is thought to be about one thousand pounds." Corresponding to this extravagant attire, a feather made with great diamonds, a sword girdle, hat-band, and spurs, all studded with diamonds, completed the apparel and decoration which the Duke intended to wear upon his entrance into Paris. For the wedding-day he prepared another rich suit, composed of purple satin, embroidered with rich orient pearls. Over this was worn a

¹ The 31st of March.

² Decoration at this time was carried to such an extent in France, that Lord Kensington describes some of the masquers at a court fête as having almost all their clothes embroidered with diamonds; embroidery of gold and silver being at that time forbidden.—Cabala, 290.

cloak made after the Spanish fashion, and the dress was finished with all 'things suitable.' His other suits," adds the narrator, "are all as rich as invention can frame, or art fashion. His colours for the entrance are white and watchet, for the wedding, crimson and gold."

Buckingham's departure was preceded by the despatching of his servants with fifty geldings and nags, and twelve coach horses. His personal retinue was consistent with all this grandeur and display; it reminds one of the gorgeous pomp of Wolsey in the height of his prosperity. Twenty privy gentlemen, seven grooms of his chambers, thirty chief women, and two master cooks constituted his own peculiar servants. Three rich suits apiece were given to each of these attendants. The inferior servants for the household consisted of twenty-five second cooks, fourteen women of the second rank, seventeen grooms to attend upon those yeomen, forty-five labourers sellerers belonging to the kitchen, twelve pages, twenty-four footmen, six huntsmen, and twelve grooms. Most of these functionaries were provided with three rich suits a piece, and to complete the establishment there were six riders with one suit apiece, and eight others to attend the stable business.

His equipages consisted of three rich coaches,

velvet inside, and covered externally with gold lace all over. Eight horses and six coachmen were allotted to each coach; then there was a band of musicians, eight score in number, "all richly suited." "There were my Lord Duke's watermen, twenty-two in number, suited in sky-coloured taffety, all gilded, with anchovys and My Lord's arms." These were appropriated to one barge only, and the whole of this regal retinue was, says the annalist, "at his Grace's charge."

Eight noblemen, the Marquis of Hamilton at their head, and six gentlemen of honourable families, attended the Duke. Amongst them were his brother-in-law, the Earl of Denbigh, and one of his brothers, designated simply as "Mr. Villars." When to these there were added twenty-four knights, of great worth, all of "whom carried six or seven pages a piece, and as many footmen," the train amounted to six or seven hundred. Nor were those all. "When," says the writer of this account, "the list is perfect, there will appear many more than I have named." *

The nuptials for which some of this grand preparation was made, had, however, taken place before it was Buckingham's fate to cross the Channel.

The day after King James's funeral was to

* See Ellis's Original Letters, 1st series, vol. i., p. 189.

have witnessed the departure of Buckingham for France. This was on the eighth of May, and the future Queen was expected to be at Dover by the eleventh.⁴ But the Duke did not arrive in Paris until the twenty-fourth; nor did Henrietta Maria land on the shores of England until the twenty-second of June.⁵

During the seven days that Buckingham remained at the French court, an uninterrupted succession of feasting and rejoicing occupied his time; whilst his imagination was engrossed by an object to which no man who had not been brought to the highest point of presumption by a career of prosperity would have ventured to aspire.

The painful and degrading position in which Anne of Austria was placed, under the sway of her mother-in-law, destitute as the young Queen was of all good advisers, and exposed by her youth and her attractions to the snares of the designing, in the vitiated sphere in which she moved, has been already referred to. Some additional traits of the appearance and character of a Princess whose fascinations produced a powerful effect upon Buckingham may not be deemed impertinent.

She was not then a mother; and the import-

⁴ Ellis's Letters.

⁵ Rushworth, p. 170.

ance of giving birth to a future monarch of France was not permitted to her until thirteen years afterwards.⁶ By her attendant and partisan, Madame de Motteville, a character so beautiful has been given of the Queen Consort of Louis the Thirteenth, as would inspire compassion for the sacrifice which bound her at the altar to a husband wholly unworthy of a wife so graceful and so virtuous, could an entire credence be assigned to that partial testimony.

According to her favourite, Anne had imbibed from her mother, Margaret of Austria, a lively piety and a love of virtue which were never quenched, even during her passage through the manifold temptations of her existence. She was replete, according to the same authoress, with goodness and with justice; she was neither suspicious, nor easily led wrong by persuasion; and where endeavours were made to prejudice her against any one whom she esteemed, her resistance showed the strength of her attachment. During her regency, when under the dominion of Cardinal Mazarin, that minister was often known to say that her devotion and rectitude of mind caused him embarrassment; “for she had,” observes Madame de Motteville, “sufficient aptitude

* Louis XIV. was not born on the 5th of September, 1638.
—See *Memoir of Madame de Motteville*, vol. i., p. 71.

of mind to know well what was right, and had she been endowed with strength of character adequate always to defend the truth, the pen of the historian could not have bestowed upon her any praise too high; but she distrusted herself, and her humility induced her to consider herself as incapable of conducting the government of the State.”⁷

This combination of good intention with weakness of purpose, these feminine requisites of piety and gentleness, added to her natural sagacity, rendered Anne of Austria one of the most engaging of all those lofty personages who figured in a capital of which one of its monarchs observed, comparing it to a head, “that it was so spiritually gross and full of disease as to require, from time to time, bleeding, in order to secure the repose of its members.”⁸

During the early years of this young Queen’s married life, she had been addressed in the language of passion by several successive suitors. “Notwithstanding the respect which her Majesty inspires,” writes Madame Motteville, “her loveliness did not fail to touch the hearts of certain individuals, who ventured to manifest their passion.”⁹

⁷ Memoir of Madame de Motteville, vol. i., p. 428.

Ibid, 199, said by Henry III. of France.

⁸ Ibid, 11.

Amongst these, first in the list was the Duc de Montmorenci, distinguished for bravery, for a handsome person, and for his great magnificence in his mode of living. This nobleman had been enamoured of the Marquise de Sable, the reigning beauty at the French Court when Anne of Austria first came to grace it; but her coldness and self-esteem chilled the ardour of her admirer. Platonic attachments, the fashion for which was first introduced by Catherine de Medici from Italy, were still in vogue; to this fashion, more fatal, perhaps, to virtue than the more direct blandishments of vice, Madame de Sable inclined. The alliance between Spain and France had introduced many of the Spanish authors to the lettered portion of the French community, and the gallantry of that nation, imbibed from the Moors, appeared to correspond with the delicate sentiments of the Italians. It did not, however, change man's nature, nor act as an antidote to his fickleness. The Duc de Montmorenci beheld Anne of Austria, and the Marquise was forgotten. Proud and yet humble, that lady, upon the first surmise of his alteration of sentiment, withdrew from the contest with one so much more elevated than herself, and refused to see him again. Nevertheless, Montmorenci found little favour in the heart of Anne of Austria, who could never believe that his passion for her was

either sincere or ardent; and who regarded, in after times, the petty gratification which it gave her as one of the symptoms of flattered vanity.

The Duc de Bellegarde, old, and a veteran in the court, for he had been the favourite of two preceding monarchs, was the next who sought to occupy the heart in which there existed a void; for Anne's indifference to her royal consort daily increased. The love-suit which this ancient nobleman presumed to address to the Queen was received by her as incense to her vanity which could not, possibly, injure her reputation; and, although she listened to his avowal of admiration at first with resentment, she soon treated it as a jest; and even the King, although disposed to be jealous, entered into the pleasantries which the devotion expressed in the lisping accents of age naturally induced.

But a far more dangerous suitor lurked about the young Queen's haunts, who, watching her from the retired recesses of the court, at once loved and persecuted her. This was the Cardinal de Richelieu.

This extraordinary character, acknowledged even by his enemies to have been the greatest man of his time, had manifested the mad attachment with which Anne of Austria inspired, in a singular manner, this astute politician. To her

confidante, Madame Motteville, the Queen had imparted a strange incident in the life of this minister, whose thoughts, designs, and affections appeared to be centered in public affairs, or, as he termed it, in the good of the state.¹⁰

One day, when, with ill-concealed disgust, Anne was listening to the conversation of the Cardinal, she was surprised by a sudden burst of hitherto subdued feelings from that crafty churchman; and she heard, with what mingled consternation and anger may be conceived, expressions of a passionate attachment. As she was about to reply in terms of indignation and contempt, the King entered the closet in which she and the Cardinal were conversing, and a sudden check was given to the subject, never to be resumed; for Anne dared not to recur to it, lest she should flatter the wishes of the Cardinal by showing her remembrance of his addresses; she would only reply to him by showing tacitly her hatred, and by her incessant refusal to accept either his proffered friendship, or his offer of mediation between her and the King. It was in vain she perceived that her conduct aggravated the bad understanding between her and her royal partner; in vain she knew that whilst the presumptuous love of the Cardinal preponderated in his breast, she yet

¹⁰ Madame de Motteville, pp. 29, 30.

drove him to extremities by her abhorrence. He demonstrated "his affection," by persecutions which ceased only with his existence; for he hoped, possibly, if he could not succeed by gentle means, to prevail over her contempt by fear.

It was at this juncture, whilst Anne, estranged from her consort, and pursued, watched, and loved by the Cardinal de Richelieu, most truly required a friend and monitor, that Buckingham arrived to throw fresh temptations and difficulties in her path. Unhappily her favourite, Madame de Chevreuse, afterwards banished from Court by Richelieu, was not a woman of prudence, and, perhaps, scarcely of virtue. By Madame de Motteville, the Duchesse de Chevreuse is regarded as the true source of all Anne's errors and misfortunes. Anne loved her, as those to whom the natural channels of affection are forbidden, or poisoned, love the soothing and humble. She never forgave Richelieu the disgrace of her favourite, nor even when she knew that it was the wish of her husband that Madame de Chevreuse should be sent away, could she submit to his wishes. Anne, in the commencement of her career, had shown much disgust to those who were termed "les dames gallantes," and had appeared, to those who knew her best, to possess the most rigid notions of female decorum. But the society of Madame de

Chevreuse had broken down that barrier in which the young and fascinating Queen found her best protection. Even after sundry imprudencies, those who were cognizant of her actions accorded to her the credit of a perfect purity of life, and bestowed upon her all the esteem which is due to the most undoubted virtue. In after life, the frankness and simplicity with which she spoke of these early passages of her life showed that no evil was attached to them, and that to vanity alone were to be attributed those rash adventures in which her reputation incurred so severe an ordeal. How far, on a review of the circumstances of her career, Anne may be acquitted of a want of feminine modesty, of a prudence the representative of virtue, must be a question for the moralist. Her character must, however, be measured in some respects by the standard of the age in which she lived.

Unhappily for Anne, at the time that Buckingham arrived in Paris, Madame de Chevreuse was passionately in love with the handsome and dangerous Earl of Holland, and made no secret of that disgraceful attachment.¹¹ It was, therefore, her endeavour to promote everything that could

¹¹ Madame de Motteville, p. 20.

produce a continued intercourse between France and this country.

Of the first meeting between Anne of Austria and Buckingham, during his embassy, there is no account. We can suppose it to have occurred under circumstances of dazzling splendour, to which many considerations, not guessed by the public, lent a strong interest. The suppressed and dangerous admiration of Richelieu might not be penetrated by Buckingham; but it was notorious that whilst Louis XIII. distrusted, and apparently neglected, his Queen, he was really disposed to respect and cherish her; and was known to have confessed to a confidant one day, in speaking of the Queen's personal attractions, that "he dared not show her any tenderness, lest he should displease the queen-mother and the Cardinal, whose aid and counsels were much more essential to him than the affection of his wife."¹²

Thus situated—bound to a husband of whose indifference she was by no means certain, but who, she well knew, had not the mental strength to cope with the Cardinal, and to avow any kindness for her—admired at a distance by the courtiers—passionately loved and fiercely persecuted by Richelieu, Anne must have presented a new source of interest and curiosity to Bucking-

¹² Madame de Motteville, p. 33.

ham ; and the course of her destiny, hard as it might seem, would give fuel to his presumption.

The dignity which Anne could assume on state occasions has been insisted upon by Madame de Motteville, when, speaking of her demeanour during the regency, she describes her then as equally fair with the fairest of the Court. A vast quantity of brown hair, powdered and frizzed, indeed, and worn in curls, set off a complexion not so delicate in colour as distinguished for the softness and smoothness of the skin. She disfigured herself, after the Spanish fashion, by wearing rouge ; and one defect was striking—her nose was thick and large. Her eyes varied in colour from a perfect blue to green ; and her glance was full of sweetness and expression. Her mouth was small, and her lips crimson, and the sweetest smiles played upon her countenance. The form of her face and forehead was admirable ; her arms and hands were celebrated for their wonderful symmetry and for their whiteness, being, without exaggeration, white as snow. The delicacy of her habits amounted almost to monomania. “Madam,” observed Cardinal Mazarin to her, “should you incur everlasting condemnation, your punishment would be to sleep in sheets of Holland cloth.”¹³ Her deportment in

¹¹ Biographie Universelle.

after life, during the minority of her son, Louis XIV., and her fortitude during the agonies of her last fatal illness, showed that the gentle and attractive Queen possessed a strong natural capacity, which circumstances eventually called into action.

Armand Jean du Plessis, Cardinal de Richelieu, the all-powerful minister of Louis XIII., was now in the height of his power; he reigned, in short, under the name of the King. In an unbounded, and perhaps entirely selfish ambition, and in the full fruition of their hopes, Buckingham and Richelieu may be said to have resembled each other. In the love of pomp and display, they were alike. The superb attire, the costly retinue of the English peer, were puerile attempts compared with the ordinary household of Richelieu. His magnificent palace in the Rue St. Honoré, known, during his time, under the name of the Palais Cardinal, and, since the year 1636, as the Palais Royal, recalled the glories of York House at Whitehall, in the days of Wolsey, with all the added refinements of a later period. There, in the chapel, might be seen ornaments decorated with gold, studded with diamonds. The most splendid tapestry, the most uncommon articles of virtu, pictures of rare value, busts and statues, adorned the palace in which

Richelieu entertained the King and the Court in stately revels. There, on one occasion, was enacted a play, drawn from the history of the Duke of Buckingham, when all the French prelates were invited, and when the Bishop de Chartres, formerly confessor to Richelieu, arranged the seats, and finally, clad in velvet, presented himself on the stage, at the head of a train of twenty-four pages, carrying the collation which was offered to the company.

At the Palais Cardinal, Buckingham learned fresh lessons of an ostentatious display, wholly inconsistent with the condition of a subject. The Cardinal's body-guard, assigned to him by the King, equalled in number that of his royal master; and the horse soldiers had a table appropriated to him in his hall; of these, the Cardinal had the power of appointment and dismissal. His ordinary personal attendants in his own house were composed of thirty-six pages, selected from noble families, and reared in his house under the tutorage of able masters—a system again recalling the household of Wolsey. When he travelled, the Cardinal was followed by a train consisting of his secretaries, his physicians, and his confessor; by eight carriages, with four horses each; and by eighty baggage mules. His guard escorted him,

and his pages; his band, composed of musicians of the first eminence, and a numerous body of domestic servants, followed the litter in which the great Richelieu, delicate from his birth, and infirm in health, was carried; the walls of the towns through which he passed being levelled to receive this princely procession, when the gates happened to be too narrow to permit its entrance. Often, indeed, it was found necessary to widen the roads.¹⁴

But, whilst Buckingham might read in the extreme expenditure of the Cardinal a plea for his own magnificence, there was much to be learned in that palace which Richelieu, like Wolsey, afterwards bestowed on the monarch to whom he owed his wealth. There, the minister of Charles might see a systematic regulation of expense; generosity without prodigality, and almost unlimited almsgiving. Abhorring solicitation, which always defeated its own aim, absolute and irascible, the Cardinal, nevertheless, loved to benefit those who served him. No hasty words escaped from him for which he was not eager to atone; and, whilst his principle was that men are only to be maintained in their duty by severity, his nature was placable to his inferiors, although proud and unrelenting to his political enemies.

¹⁴ Petilot, *Notice sur Richelieu*, ii., p. 112.

Another lesson might Buckingham derive in the crowded *salons* of the Palais Cardinal—the patronage of letters. Richelieu admitted to intimacy the most eminent authors of the day; and so much did he enjoy their society, that his chief physician, Monsieur Caton, used to say to him, when prescribing for the Cardinal:—“Sir, we will do all that is in our power; but all my remedies will be useless, if you do not add to them a drachm of Boisrobert;”—Boisrobert being a writer whose works are long since forgotten, but whose powers of telling well the news of the court and city used to charm the Cardinal. In the conversation of men of letters, Richelieu found, indeed, his greatest solace; and nothing gave him greater satisfaction than a victory in argument, or a success in *repartée*.¹⁵ In the Chamber of the Palais Cardinal might be heard poets reciting their unpublished verses, or going away richly paid and praised when their productions were approved. “Une Salle de Spectacle,” as it was called, was erected by the Cardinal in his palace, and five favourite authors, Corneille, Boisrobert, Colletet, D’Estoile, and Robron, were employed to work out into a dramatic form the poetical conceptions of their patron. Neither was this

¹⁵ Petilot, x., 126.

great minister content with lavishing his individual bounty upon men of genius; he formed the plan of the Academy of Paris, an institution which was to give laws to literature, and the notion of which originated in a private society of distinguished men who met together to converse, and to communicate their works. In this extension of his powerful aid to letters, Richelieu found an obstacle which Buckingham was not destined to encounter. Louis XIII. hated every species of study, and despised that which he had not intellect to appreciate. Charles, on the other hand, was intelligent and inquiring. His education had been carefully attended to; and his taste for the arts introduced a degree of refinement into English society such as this country had never before beheld.

It may easily be conceived with what intense curiosity, mingled, perhaps, with a spirit of rivalry, Buckingham must have regarded his introduction to Richelieu, and how extended a notion of the power of a minister he must have received during his notable, though brief, sojourn in France.

The dignity and courtesy of Richelieu, in his ordinary deportment, might, perhaps, have supplied a hint to the haughty and uncertain Buckingham, naturally imperious and lofty.

The Cardinal knew well the value of affability. He had a most flexible countenance, every expression of which he could control; and even, according to Marie de Medici, command tears at pleasure. One moment he appeared to be sinking away in extreme pain; the next found him gay, gallant, and active. His manners were most caressing to those whom he designed to win over; but to all whom he met, his reception was full of apparent kindness—his extended hand preceded words full of courtesy, and his ready smile fascinated those who approached him.

But beneath this exterior there lay the most relentless spirit of vengeance towards all whom he regarded as enemies, and the smile and the ready dissimulation were fearful to many who were conscious of having fallen under his displeasure.

Richelieu, in his morals, gave occasion to much scandal. Beneath an assiduous exercise of some of the external forms of religion, he was supposed to conceal latitudinarian principles, and his private life was stained by great irregularities. The decencies of society were, nevertheless, maintained by the Cardinal, who was sensible that nothing lowers a man so much in public esteem as to be the slave of his passions; yet, since there scarcely existed, in his time, a man of more accom-

modating principles than the Cardinal in public life, so there were few, it was secretly believed, who had stronger passions to curb, or to indulge, than the most reverend celibate of the Château of Rueil—that wonderful and splendid retreat, of which no traces are left to mark the alleys wherein the festive throngs delighted, nor to recall the prisons in the park, to which the all-powerful Cardinal consigned his enemies.

CHAPTER V.

BUCKINGHAM'S EMBASSY TO PARIS—HE DESPATCHES BALTHAZAR GERBIER TO SELECT AND PURCHASE PICTURES—LETTER OF THE PAINTER TO HIM—THE MAGNIFICENCE OF THE FRENCH COURT—BUCKINGHAM'S APPEARANCE AT THE PARISIAN COURT—HIS ASPIRING TO THE FAVOUR OF ANNE OF AUSTRIA—THE MANNER IN WHICH HIS HOMAGE WAS RECEIVED BY ANNE, AS STATED BY MADAME DE MOTTEVILLE—THE FREEDOM OF MANNERS, TERMED BY ANNE “*L'HONNÈTE GALANTERIE*,” PERMITTED BY THE QUEEN—THE DAZZLING APPEARANCE OF BUCKINGHAM—ANECDOTE OF THE JEALOUSY OF THE FRENCH—POINT OF ETIQUETTE BETWEEN BUCKINGHAM AND THE CARDINAL RICHELIEU—BUCKINGHAM ATTENDS HENRIETTA MARIA TO THE COAST—ANNE OF AUSTRIA ACCOMPANIES HER SISTER-IN-LAW TO AMIENS—INCIDENT THERE, IN WHICH BUCKINGHAM BETRAYED HIS MAD PASSION—HE RECEIVES A REBUFF FROM THE QUEEN—HIS LOVE-SUIT NOT CHECKED BY HER REPROOF—HE SHEDS TEARS ON PARTING FROM ANNE—JOURNEYS ON TO BOULOGNE AND RETURNS TO AMIENS—HIS INTERVIEW THERE WITH ANNE—HE THEN PURSUES HIS JOURNEY TO ENGLAND—LETTERS, AND AFFECTING CONDUCT OF HIS WIFE—THE MEETING OF CHARLES AND HENRIETTA MARIA—BUCKINGHAM RETAINS HIS INFLUENCE OVER CHARLES I.



CHAPTER V.

PREVIOUS to his own departure, Buckingham had despatched Balthazar Gerbier, the painter, to Paris, in order to select and purchase pictures, and other articles, to decorate some of his own stately dwellings, not one of which seems to have been, at that time, completed. The emissary was dazzled by the sight of foreign splendours, and sent a lively account of them to the Duke. "My lord," he wrote, "do you beg of Madame (the Duchess of Buckingham) that she will be pleased to furnish York House; for this Monsieur Chevreuse, and all the folks here, are so fine, and so magnificent and curious in their houses, that your Excellency will be much pleased. I beg of your Excellency to see the apartments of this Bishop of Paris, and you will see in what nice order the pictures are arranged, and how rich everything is. And, for the love of Paul

Veronese, be pleased to dress the walls of the old gallery—poor, blank walls, they will die of cold this winter! Your Excellency will see also here, as at the house of the Duke de Chevreuse, the best paintings are before the chimney, and approve what I have always said, that they always put the principal piece over the chimney. For all their bravery, there is still magnificence in gold. But your Excellency will see a great mistake they make in the construction of their chimneys. These are all made of wood, which is very improper so near the fire. They are, also, too deep; all the heat remains within. Moreover, there are paintings of the French masters; but we have the pearl of the Fabians.”¹⁶

Madame de Motteville extols the splendour and gaiety of the court; and although the portraiture of the galaxy of beauties whom she describes belongs to a later period, one may readily conceive that attractions were not wanting in that sphere graced by Anne of Austria and Henrietta Maria.

The impression made by Buckingham on the

¹⁶ Memoirs of the Court of King James, by Bishop Goodman, edited by the Rev. T. B. Brewer, vol. ii., p. 344. Taken from the original Hol. Tan., lxxiii., 392. Translated from the French.

French was favourable. "He had," observes Madame de Motteville, "a fine figure. His face was very handsome; his mind and character were free from littleness. He was magnificent in his deportment and liberal; and, as the favourite of a great prince, he had funds at his disposal, and all the crown jewels of England to employ in his own adornment." "It is not to be wondered at," she continues, "that with so many attractions, he should have dared to cherish presumptuous thoughts—to have harboured desires at once so lofty, so dangerous, and so reprehensible; and he had the good fortune to persuade those who were aware of his wishes that they were not proffered impertinently;" "yet," adds the confidante, almost reluctantly, "one may venture to suppose that his vows were received in the same degree as that in which the gods suffer the homage of mortals."¹⁷

The object of these aspiring and criminal hopes was, it appears, the young Queen of France. Nor is there reason to conclude that the same indifference was manifested by Anne to Buckingham as had been shown by her to her former admirers. In after times, when the perilous illusion had for ever passed away, Anne, according to Madame de Motteville, admitted that in

¹⁷ *Memoires de Madame de Motteville*, vol. i., p. 14.

that season of her youth she had not perceived that the delightful and sprightly conversation, known to her by the term of *l'honnête galanterie*, could possibly be censured, especially when no secret understanding was couched beneath the lively converse; nor did the thoughtless Queen attach to it any greater possibility of blame than she should do to those ladies of her native Spanish Court, who, being forbidden to talk to men, except in the presence of the King and Queen of Spain, were accustomed to boast of their conquests amongst each other, and to consider them rather as enhancing, than detracting from, their reputation.¹⁸ The Duchess de Chevreuse, Anne confessed, had been wholly occupied with gallantries and diversions, and the Queen, led by her advice and example, could not, in spite of her modesty and principle, avoid becoming interested in an expression of passion which seemed to her far more flattering to her self-love than dangerous to her virtue. In these terms did Anne, after the lapse of years, refer to the transient but intoxicating adulation paid to her by Buckingham.

Possibly Anne was dazzled by the lofty grace of her new votary, contrasted as it was to some advantage with the homely-featured Philip

¹⁸ *Memoires de Madame de Motteville*, vol. i., p. 16.

Herbert, Earl of Montgomery, one of the noblemen who had attended Buckingham to Paris. The mission could, as Sir Henry Wotton observes, "want no ornaments or bravery to adorn it." He relates an anecdote of the Duke, who, dancing one day in a suit all gorgeously overspread with diamonds, lost one of his most valuable jewels, which, strange to say, was the next day recovered, although it had been lost in a "court full of pages." This restitution Sir Henry regards as but another proof of the good fortune which everywhere followed Buckingham.¹⁹ It was, perhaps, on his court suit, which was valued at 80,000*l.*²⁰

It was not to be supposed that Anne would escape the voice of scandal, or that the attentions of one upon whom all eyes were fixed should remain unobserved. One little occurrence, which became the subject of general animadversion, took place after all the Court festivities were at an end, and when Anne and the Duke were on the eve of separation. It speaks, however, plainly of previous passages of gallantry on the one hand, and indulgence on the other.

A week of feasting and rejoicing was over, and Buckingham prepared to conduct the young Queen of England to her foreign home, on the

¹⁹ Reliquiae Wottonianæ, 221.

²⁰ Miss Aikin's Memoirs of Charles I., vol. i.

second of June. It appears that, notwithstanding the great goodwill entertained towards the Duke by Monsieur de Chevreuse, he showed some degree of jealousy on account of his unwonted display. Buckingham, previous to his departure, ordered some diamonds to be set in rings, with the view of bestowing them on several of the courtiers; but he was warned of the effect which this would produce by his faithful agent, Balthazar Gerbier. "I have been informed," writes the painter, "that at the Court where you are, they have got intelligence of the diamonds your excellency is causing to be set in rings, and so they are trying to guess what can be your reason. The greater part think it is in order to make presents, which they are resolved not to receive. Your Excellency's perfect sagacity needs no interpreter for understanding their policy, which is only that somebody has been such an exceeding busybody as to blow into the ear of the Duc de Chevreuse that if your Excellency were to be remarked above others for liberality, it would be greatly to his detriment." Under this apprehension, the secretary of De Chevreuse importuned Gerbier, who seems to have filled the capacity of House Steward to the Duke, as well as his other employment, to have an account drawn up of what was given to the household servants of De Chevreuse,

and also of the other presents. The virtue of the French Court seems to have been aroused by the expected gifts, which were regarded as an affront, and it was intimated that if offered they would not be received. This delicacy of conduct was naturally contrasted with the rapacity of the Duke, who had, it seems, accepted presents in France amounting in value to eighty thousand pounds, as he himself stated in a letter to the King.²¹

Having thus offended the pride of the Parisian courtiers by his overweening prodigality, Buckingham set forth to commit an act of imprudence still more obvious and far more indefensible. He did not quit Paris, however, without having both given and received an offence from even the courtly Richelieu, who, having addressed to him a letter, directed to "Le Duc de Buckingham," instead of to "Monseigneur le Duc de Buckingham," received one in reply inscribed to "Monsieur le Cardinal de Richelieu."²² Thus quitting Paris as he had done Madrid, in bad odour with those who

²¹ Bishop Goodman, vol. i., p. 290. Letter from Balthazar Gerbier of the Duke of Buckingham. Also State Papers, vol. iii., No. 7.

²² Punctilio was then at its height. The point of etiquette, whether the Earl of Carlisle was to wait upon the Cardinal first, or the Cardinal upon the Earl, was settled by Richelieu's feigning sickness and continuing in bed.—Miss Aikin's Court of Charles I., p. 24.

had eagerly welcomed him to their kingdom, Buckingham attended his young and royal charge towards the coast.

Orders had been sent by the French King that his sister should be everywhere welcomed with honours as signal as if he were himself present; and to show her still more respect, Anne of Austria accompanied the young Queen as far as Amiens.

It was here that, whilst walking in the garden of the house where she was lodged, a memorable interview between Anne and Buckingham took place. She was, indeed, surrounded by her usual suite of attendants, when the enamoured and imprudent Duke sought and found her. Putangue, the equerry of the Queen of France, perceiving, as Buckingham approached, that he was anxious to speak to his royal mistress alone, fell back for a short time, thinking that delicacy forbade him to listen to what was uttered by the Duke. Having by chance, according to Anne's subsequent statement, turned into a winding alley, the unguarded Queen and her lover found themselves alone. In a few moments a cry was heard by the listening attendants in the garden; the equerry hastened to his mistress, who blamed him exceedingly for having quitted her. Anne afterwards explained this occurrence, which naturally excited much dis-

cussion, by relating, that, alarmed at finding herself alone with her avowed admirer, she was still more agitated by the expressions of passionate attachment which Buckingham addressed to her. She knew that she could not listen to the importunity of an ardent passion without participating morally in its guilt. She acted therefore, as she thought, and as her apologist, Madame de Motteville, conceived, honestly and sagaciously in preferring the preservation of her own self-respect to the fear of being unjustly blamed. Thus reflecting, she had no apprehension that her exclamation of surprise and terror would bear a bad construction even to her consort, who evidently regarded her with distrust.

Having proffered some reason for his return, the Duke even left the future Queen Consort of his royal master at Boulogne, and hastened to the queen-mother, Marie de Medicis, at Amiens. He even went so far as to pretend that he was commissioned to enter into some new negotiation; whether he succeeded in blinding her or not is not stated; but, after conversing with her for some time, he presented himself to Anne of Austria; that princess had been apprized of Buckingham's journey, by her confidante, the Duchess de Chevreuse, who accompanied the Queen of England. Anne received him, after

the fashion of her adopted country, in bed, and without her customary state; nor did she express the slightest surprise at his appearance; but her astonishment was considerable when she saw the Duke fall on his knees by her bedside, and kiss the coverlids with expressions so agitated, so emphatic, that she could no longer, as she afterwards confessed, "avoid perceiving the earnestness of his passion." She avowed to Madame de Motteville that she was overcome with surprise, not unmixed with resentment, for she comprehended, perhaps too late for her own reputation, that a real insult was conveyed under this proffered idolatry. She remembered that she was the Queen of France, and a long and angry silence marked her displeasure. At this critical moment, the Countess de Lannoi, at that time her principal lady of the chamber, and who, in that capacity, was placed at the head of the bed, came forward to the queen's aid. The countess was a grave, respected, and aged personage, whose very look might well strike terror into the presumptuous suitor. She addressed herself to the Duke reprovingly, telling him that such conduct was inconsistent with the customs permitted in the French Court, and bidding him arise. She spoke, however, to one who was of late little habituated to control, and she could make no impression. Buckingham replied

that he was not a Frenchman, and therefore under no obligation to observe the laws of France. He spoke calmly, and then again addressing the queen, he broke out into expressions of the utmost tenderness. Anne replied in terms expressive of her anger at his boldness ; but whilst her language was reproachful, her manner appears to have been destitute of the indignation natural to the occasion. She commanded him, however, to rise from his knees, and quit the room ; and he then complied.

The next day, notwithstanding this audacity, Buckingham was permitted to see the Queen again, but in the presence of the assembled Court. It is probable that Anne wished what occurred not to transpire, and that this audience might be one of policy. But the precaution, if such it was, did not avail to save Anne from the most injurious suspicions. Buckingham, after taking leave, proceeded to England, bearing in his mind a resolution to return to France at the earliest occasion. Anne and the queen-mother, after some little delay, repaired to Fontainebleau to rejoin the King. Soon afterwards, Louis was informed of all that had occurred. The circumstances were even aggravated to the disadvantage of the unhappy young queen. Several of her attendants were discharged. Putangue, her

equerry, was banished ; her physician and others shared the same fate. One of Anne's Spanish ladies, Donna Estefania, had the courage to express her disgust at this severity. "I think," she said, addressing Le Père Sequent, the King's confessor, "that so much malignity visited upon this lady is not a good sign ; it does not look well." ²³

Buckingham, meantime, journeyed towards England, his heart full of the hope of returning at some future day to behold the object of his mad passion. Yet he had every motive of tenderness and consideration towards his duchess, whose fondest hopes were constantly, during absence, fixed upon her faithless husband. Balthazar Gerbier, who, from his situation in the Duke's household, had ample opportunities of witnessing her devotion to the Duke, terms her, when writing to Buckingham, during his sojourn in Spain, "your incomparable Penelope, who constantly, in this sea of trouble, has demonstrated the greatness of her constancy, comforting herself with the hope of seeing her sun return above this horizon, beautiful and shining as it set." ²⁴ Her anxiety during his former embassy had been such as to injure her health, or,

²³ Madame de Motteville, vol. i., p. 15.

²⁴ Court and Times of James I., by Bishop Goodman, vol. ii., p. 265.

as she touchingly expressed it, “merely melancholy was the cause of her sickness.” Nor was that sorrow unmixed with doubt of her husband’s constancy. Buckingham, with his natural candour and fearlessness, perhaps, too, wanting the moral sense of shame for such transgressions, appears, from a passage in one of the Duchess’s letters, to have confessed to her some of his infidelities during his Spanish journey, and to have expressed great contrition for them. Fears had, at that time, been entertained of his wife’s health; and consumption was the disease apprehended. The Duke was on that occasion stung to the heart by the dread of losing his “poor Kate,” as she termed herself. Reflecting on his reckless gallantries with shame, he appears to have considered the illness of his wife as a judgment upon him, and intimated to her that should she die, he should think it too hard a blow, even for one so sinful as himself.²⁵ The reply made to him by his gentle wife ought to have ensured everlasting gratitude and constancy, were it in the nature of man to be bound by such ties to woman. “And where you say,” writes this devoted woman, “it is too great a punishment for a greater offender than you hope you are, dear heart, how severe God had been pleased to have dealt with me, it had been for my sins, and not

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 311.

yours, for truly you are so good a man that, but for one sin, you are not so great an offender, only your loving women so well. But I hope God has forgiven you, and I am sure you will not commit the like again, and God has laid a great affliction on me by this grievous absence ; and I trust God will send me life, and Moll too, that you shall enjoy us both ; for I am sure," she adds, " God will bless us both, for your sake ; and I cannot express the infinite affection I bear you ; but, for God's sake, believe me, that there was never woman loved man as I do you."

The Duchess had at that time testified her delight at her husband's quitting that "wicked Madrid," as she called it. She little thought how detrimental to her married happiness a residence of twelve days only in the no less vitiated air of Paris was to prove.

On quitting Amiens, Buckingham returned to Boulogne, where he met his Duchess, who had been sent by Charles to kiss the young queen's hand, and to desire that she would take her own time of coming over, "with most conveniency to her own person."²⁶ On the twenty-second of June (n.s.) Henrietta embarked, and twenty-four hours afterwards arrived at Dover.

²⁶ Rushworth, p. 170.

Charles had long been anxiously expecting the Queen. On the last day of May he had posted down to Canterbury, there to wait for her, attended by a large company of lords and ladies, "who tarried there to their great charge."²⁷ The King was obliged to console them, and to prolong their attendance with messages daily from Dover, by which step, a contemporary writes, "he persuaded them to patience." The young Queen was detained, as it was alleged, by her mother's illness ; "but," adds the correspondent just quoted, "if all be true that is reported, they can make no great haste, being to march with a little army of 4000 at least, whereof the Duc de Chevreuse and his followers make up three hundred, and sixty that belong to his kitchen."

On the fourth of June, the Earl of Northampton, who had gone into France, it was said, in a "mad mood," had arrived at Dover at nine o'clock in the evening. They found the King "on the leads" (of the Castle, probably), having spent two very cold hours there, anxiously awaiting their arrival. It appears that Charles then wished to cross to Boulogne; but it was objected to, as being a precedent that would lower the kings of England,

²⁷ Inedited Letter in the State Paper Office. (Not in the Calendar.)

and dangers might accrue upon his placing himself in a foreign state.²⁸

When, in the presence of the whole court and the flower of the nobility, they met for the first time, everyone except the royal couple retired, and Charles and his bride held half-an-hour's conversation alone. Henrietta is said to have taken the earliest opportunity to entreat the King "that he would not be angry with her for her faults of ignorance, before he had first instructed her to eschew them, for that she, being young, and coming into a strange country, both by her years and ignorance of the customs of the nation, might commit many errors." And she requested that the King would, in such cases, apply to use no third person as a mediator, but himself inform her as to what she had done amiss. "The King," adds the same authority, "thanked her for it, desiring her to use him even as she had desired him to use her, which she willingly promised."²⁹

The plague was then raging to a fearful extent in the metropolis; and it was afterwards, by those who witnessed the sad termination of this reign, interpreted as an evil omen, as it began thus, although the previous reign had commenced with

²⁸ State Papers, vol. iii., No. 25.

²⁹ Rushworth, p. 171.

a similar national calamity; whereas the sway of James had been remarkable for peace and prosperity. "These two plagues," remarks the historian L'Estrange, "that of the father, this of the son, were natives both of one parish, White-chapel, yea, under the same roof, and issued forth on the same day of the month, such correspondence was there in their entry."³⁰ There were not wanting those, however, who regarded this grievous visitation, the excess of which common sense would attribute to narrow streets and lanes, "where air and sweetness were the only strangers," to a judgment on the young King's alliance with Papacy and France.³¹ It acted as a check upon present rejoicings, and, although great preparations had been made to receive the royal pair, most of the procession was omitted on account of the pestilence, no fewer than twenty-three parishes being infected; and the plague having increased fearfully during the "extremest cold weather that had ever been known," what, it was observed, was to be looked for when the heat came, and the fruits were ripe?³²

Under these unpromising auspices did Henrietta

³⁰ Kennet's Complete History of England, vol. ii., p. 4.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Inedited Letter in the State Paper Office.

Maria take up her abode in Somerset House, then styled Denmark House, where her chapel and convent for Capuchin Friars were established, the execution of the laws against Roman Catholics having been previously suspended by a warrant from the King.³³

Those who prognosticated uneasiness to Charles, and detriment to the country, were not long kept in suspense as to the fulfilment of their prophecy, for more uncongenial minds than those of Charles and his royal bride were never destined to meet; nor did they long adhere to the wise rule proposed, of allowing no third party to reconcile differences.

Buckingham still maintained his exalted position. The circumstances in which he was placed were such as had never occurred in this country before. "With King Charles," as Sir Anthony Weldon observes, "did also rise his father's favourite, and in much more glory and lustre than in his father's time, as if he were no less an inheritor of his son's favour than the son of the father's crown."³⁴ This pre-eminence was regarded by the Puritan party as a grievous evil. James, they suspected rather than knew, was somewhat

³³ Life of Lord Keeper Williams, p. 10.

³⁴ Court of King Charles, *Secret History of the Court of James I.*, p. 28.

weary of his favourite's insolence ; but, in Charles's time, " he reigned like an impetuous storm, bearing down all before him that stood in his way, and would not yield to him, nor comply with him."³⁵ Such was the vulgar opinion ; whilst the submission of Charles was considered to show a want of dignity and heroism, especially when the affronts passed upon him by Buckingham, in the King's youth, were remembered.

There were others who took a different view of the subject ; and the warm affection manifested by Charles to the Duke, surviving, as it did, the grave, has been justly commended. " When once," observes the historian Lilly, " he (Charles the First) really affected, he was ever a perfect friend ; witness his continuance of affection unto all Buckingham's friends after his death, yea, until his own decay of fortune."³⁶

Raised, as he was, to the highest pinnacle of human greatness in his native land, there were some humiliating circumstances which seriously affected the domestic happiness of Buckingham. Of these, the chief was the disgrace of his brother, Lord Purbeck, and the infelicity of that marriage which had been accomplished at so much expense of integrity. In February, 1624-25, it had

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Lilly's True History of James I. and Charles I.

been deemed necessary to institute proceedings against Lady Purbeck and Sir Robert Howard upon the ground of adultery and sorcery, and James I., though scarcely able to sign, had set his hand to the warrant.

The King, nevertheless, did this act unwillingly ; and he had even previously dissuaded Buckingham from seeking a commitment, as he said the matter ought to be conducted by "justice and not favour." Upon receiving this advice, the Duke wrote to Sir Randal Crewe, Lord Chief Justice, requesting him to communicate on this point with Innocent Lanier, a man much trusted by Lord Purbeck. That unhappy nobleman was then residing with the Duke, who seemed anxious to retain him, fearing that otherwise "Sir Robert and Lady Purbeck might, by their crafty insinuations, draw from him speeches to their advantage."⁷⁷

This prosecution was carried on with considerable bitterness of spirit. Upon the first steps taken in the affair, the Duke of Buckingham was sent for to London ; and the summons despatched contained this assurance :—"I find them" (the solicitor and attorney-general) "resolved to deal roundly in this business, as your Grace desires."

⁷⁷ State Papers, vol. clxxxiii., No. 41.

The advice given by these two crown lawyers was to bring the case before the High Commission Court, which could sit without delay in the vacation, and when the crime had been proved there, the divorce could be obtained by ordinary law. They thought it unadvisable to send these prisoners to prison, "a step unusual for persons of their rank," but "advised that they be confined in the houses of aldermen, where they would be more strictly restrained than in prison." They were then examining witnesses.

Buckingham, in answer to this letter, after thanking the lawyers for their counsel, declared himself satisfied with it. "They were," he said, "to do their utmost to discover the truth, but his family being nearly linked with that of Sir Howard, he wished no undue severity in the prosecution. He entreated the King to let the law take its course, and not to shew any favour in the business."³⁸ It was immediately, nevertheless, resolved to incarcerate Sir Robert Howard, even without a hearing, and he was forthwith despatched to the Fleet Prison. His partner in guilt, although at first dismayed by the reception of a letter from the Lord Chief Justice, summoned to her aid the dauntless assurance which she inherited from her mother, Lady Hatton, and

* State Papers, vol. clxxxiv., No. 7.

observed that she “was resolved to prove a new lodging and new keepers.” Her nurse, and the child who was the supposed offspring of her infamous connection, were left in the custody of persons appointed, and remained in Denmark House. Eventually, Sir Robert, and Lady Purbeck, with her son, were consigned to the charge of two Aldermen, Barkham and Freeman, “to be close kept.”³⁹ Such was the fear entertained of incurring Buckingham’s displeasure, that bail was withheld until his mighty will was ascertained. Notwithstanding that the commissioners appointed to examine into this singular case declared that “they saw no fruit in keeping the delinquents in prison,” and hinted that their incarceration being “fruitless,” their bailment might give the world satisfaction,⁴⁰ Buckingham, stimulated, probably, by the desire of emancipating his unfortunate brother from his union with a woman of abandoned character, appears to have lent himself to accusations by which the offence of the ill-fated Lady Purbeck should assume a criminal character.

In the endeavour to establish the fact of adul-

³⁹ State Papers.—Letter dated Feb. 19th.

⁴⁰ Letter from Sir R. Heath and Sir T. Coventry to the Duke of Buckingham.—See Bishop Goodman’s Memoirs, vol. ii., p. 376.

tery with Sir Robert Howard, there appears to have been some failure. The suspicions were "strong and violent," as the legal functionaries declared, against Sir Robert Howard, but no "express confession from parties, nor testimony of witnesses," was obtained by which the *fact* was substantiated. With regard to the allegations concerning witchcraft, the most extraordinary statements were adduced. This young lady of rank had, it was affirmed, "administered powders and potions that did intoxicate her husband's brain, and practised somewhat of that kind upon the Duke of Buckingham."⁴¹ To this accusation, the insanity which is said to have darkened the Earl of Purbeck's career, and the frequent reports of the unfriendly, that Buckingham was "mad," gave a semblance of probability sufficient in those days of superstition. But those who were judges in the affair happily were more enlightened than many of their contemporaries. In the first place, the chief witness, one Lambe, described as a "notorious old rascal," had been himself condemned the previous summer for a heinous offence; and arraigned a year or two previously for practising witchcraft on "my Lord Kingston" at Worcester.

⁴¹ State Papers, vol. clxxiv., No. 47. Inedited Papers, Domestic, 1625.

"I see not," writes a contemporary, "what the fellow can gain by this confession, but to be hanged the sooner."⁴² Nevertheless, the information was too acceptable to the powers that then overawed society, not to meet with its reward. It was proved, indeed, that Lady Purbeck, after the fashion of her day, contemplated the power of witchcraft as one means of blinding or infuriating her husband. The example of the infamous Lady Somerset had not died away in the memory of one who seems to have resembled her in some points—in her hatred of the husband to whom she was assigned for mercenary ends—in her mad passion for another man, and in the dark agents to whom she resorted for aid, and by whom she was betrayed. Lady Purbeck often visited Lambe; "and," wrote the Commissioners to Buckingham, "we verily think with evil intention to your brother." Whether Sir Robert Howard accompanied her or not in these furtive visitations does not appear. Upon reviewing the scanty and unsatisfactory evidence, it was concluded by the attorney and solicitor-general, that the "use to be made of this part of the business would be rather to aggravate and make odious the other part of the offence, than to proceed upon it as a

⁴² State Papers, vol. clxxiv., No. 47.—Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, Feb. 26th, 1625. Inedited State Papers.

direct crime of itself." Nothing, they acknowledged, had yet appeared, that could give "them cause to think the matter to be capital against the delinquents;" and no further witnesses were forthcoming.

In the midst of these proceedings, it is curious to observe the retribution which, in the course of worldly events, forces itself upon our notice. Lady Hatton, obliged to apply for counsel to her despised lord, to whose masterly judgment she was compelled, in her emergency, to resort, was a spectacle to divert, and even to instruct society. "Would you think," writes Mr. Chamberlain, "that Lady Hatton's stomach could stoop so low as to seek the Lord Coke, at Stoke, for his counsel and assistance in this affair?"

Well might Lady Hatton tremble for the result to this daughter whom she had sacrificed to her worldly view, for a spirit of persecution now manifested itself more and more clearly. Before the High Commission, the frail being whose fate was thus sealed at her very entrance into life acquitted herself, as a contemporary informs us, "reasonably well hitherto," but he adds, "*ne Hercules quidem contra tot et tantos.*" By all her demeanour was allowed to be "modest and prudent, and without reflection on other parties." The witnesses whom she adduced were, however,

not only silenced, but punished. One Bembige, a servant of the Archbishop of Canterbury, was committed for speaking in her behalf, and for stating how severely she was used by the adverse proctors. Those gentlemen complaining of these remarks, Bembige was sent out of court; obtaining from Lady Purbeck the distinction of "being one of her martyrs."⁴³ The cause was eventually referred to the Ecclesiastical Court, wherein the Earl of Anglesea was the nominal prosecutor. Sir Robert Howard, not answering to the citation served upon him, was publicly excommunicated at Paul's Cross. He claimed, however, his privilege as a "parliament man," and it was conceded to him.

Lady Purbeck, meantime, remained under the custody of Alderman Barkham; no friends came forward to stand bail for her; neither Lady Hatton nor her father supplied her with money. She sent to Buckingham for means to fee her council;⁴⁴ nor does the aid appear to have been refused; neither can any blame attach to the Duke for his endeavours to free a brother who was now incapable of acting for himself,—as appears fully from Lord Anglesea, Christopher Villiers being

⁴³ Inedited Letter from Mr. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, State Paper Office.

⁴⁴ State Papers, vol. cxxxv., No. 12.

the prosecutor—from a woman who, whatever may have been the extenuation of her faults, was living audaciously in a state of infamy. Neither can we wonder at his afterwards requesting Prince Charles to insist on his leaving the Court, where she had set so fearful an example.

Lady Purbeck was driven away, however, for another reason; although a divorce was not obtained, she was sentenced by the High Commission to stand in the Savoy church in a white sheet. She fled, in the disguise of a page, into the country; and in 1634 was again domiciled in the house of her father, who at least had human sympathies, in which his wife had proved herself utterly wanting. Coke, in his old age, received and pardoned the much humiliated daughter. “She continued,” says Lord Campbell, “to watch piously over him till his death.”⁴⁵ Nor could the task have been otherwise than consolatory. An accident was the proximate cause of the breaking up of that wonderful frame that had never known rest. Coke had, in his own mind, deserved well of the world; he was wont to give thanks that he had never given his body to physic, nor his heart to cruelty, nor his hand to corruption.⁴⁶ When his friends sent him three doctors to benefit

“ Campbell’s Life of Sir E. Coke, p. 885, note.

“ Loyd’s State Worthies.

his health, he told them he had never taken physic since he was born, and would not now begin; that he had now upon him a disease which all the drugs of Asia, nor the gold of Africa, nor the doctors of Europe could not cure, old age." Notwithstanding Coke's great practice, he was at one time in debt to the extent of 60,000*l.*, owing, it was said, to his sons. In his will he left injunctions that he should be buried without pomp in Littleshall church, and a monument be erected for him there; and that his books might be preserved for his posterity.⁴⁷

In his own immediate family, Buckingham enjoyed such happiness as the fulfilment of every earthly wish could bestow. He was now the father of two children; Lady Mary Villiers, who, if we may accredit the representations of a fond mother, was full of intelligence and promise. The letters written during the absence of her husband, by the Duchess, abound with such anecdotes of her then only child, as are only important as they mark a mutual tie, and show confidence in the affection of him to whom those epistles were addressed—to one whom she believed to be all constancy and attachment—and to whom such little traits of her daughter could alone be imparted by a mother.

⁴⁷ State Papers, vol. cliv., No. 85.

“Moll,” she writes, “is very well, and is a-writing to make you merry ; she is bound to you for your sending her a token.” “Mr. Clarke will tell you who she is like ; she is so lively and full of play that she will make you very good sport when you come home. I hope you have received her picture, though you have sent me no word whether you have or no.”⁴⁸ This picture was painted by Balthazar Gerbier ; but, not being completed in time, the artist was obliged to substitute one which had been completed three years previously ; “for the little lady,” writes Gerbier, in allusion to this substitution, “she has been painted in great haste ; the hands, which crave a blessing from your excellency, are merely outlined.”⁴⁹ The “Lady Mary” was still an infant when the Duke returned from Spain ; but the remembrance of her father, which had been impressed upon her childish thoughts, is exemplified in the following passage from a letter of her grandfather, the Earl of Rutland.⁵⁰ “Your wife, your sister, Mr. Porter, and myself were at supper at York House, when news came Dick Graeme* was come ; but we were so impatient to see him, that some could eat no meat,

“ Goodman’s Memoirs, vol. ii., p. 313.

“ Ibid, p. 264.

“ Dated April 1st, 1623 ; Harl. MSS., 1581, p. 129.

“ One of the Duke’s attendants.

and when we did see him and your letter, they were so overjoyed they forgot to eat; nay, my pretty, sweet Moll, as she was undressing, cried nothing but 'dad, dad.'

This prattling child was now growing into what King James entitled "a fair maid;" and a son, George, afterwards celebrated for his wit and profligacy, had been added to the many blessings showered upon Buckingham by Providence. His wife, who had, during his absence, kept his picture, "as her sweet saint, always within sight of her bed," was now happy in the presence of one whom she seems to have loved with all the ardour of a first affection. Even the infidelities of her husband, now beginning to be generally known, appear to have left her love unchanged. She knew well the temptations that beset him. "Every one tells me," she writes at one time, "how happy I am in a husband;" "that you will not look at a woman, and yet how they woo you." When undeceived, the Duchess had the greatness of mind to make allowances for this flattered child of fortune; she knew that if any man were to be excused, it was he who, in foreign courts, had encountered the snares to which his disposition rendered him too easy a prey. The delinquency, as we have seen, nearly broke her heart; but she forgave and received the delinquent. She appears

to have ever retained a conviction that her husband's heart was true to her, whatever his errors may have been. "Yourself is a jewel that will win the hearts of all the women in the world; but I am confident it is not in their power to win your heart from a heart that is, was, and ever shall be yours till death."⁵¹

Notwithstanding his domestic blessings, his fame and power, Buckingham had his disquiets. Amongst these, the chief was pecuniary embarrassments. The favourite, whose rapacity has been the theme of historians, was harassed by difficulties which must have arisen partly from his great extravagance, partly from the countless demands made upon the resources of those in power.

Charles the First seems to have been no less solicitous than his father had been to enrich his beloved Villiers. In July, 1624, he granted to him, in conjunction with Sir George Carew, a commission for making saltpetre and gunpowder; and, at the same time, he bestowed upon Sir Edward Villiers an annuity of a thousand per annum,⁵² probably in order to relieve Buckingham of the charge of assisting his brother. These

⁵¹ Harl. MSS., 1581, p. 279.

⁵² Inedited Documents in the State Paper Office, July 13th, 1624.

favours were followed by another, which proved a source of much expense to the Duke—that of York House, which, with other messuages in St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, was, on the fourteenth of July, 1624, granted to Buckingham.⁵³ Immense sums had also been presented to Buckingham when ambassador to France; he wrote to the King, during his sojourn in Paris, that he had then already received gifts nearly to the value of eighty thousand pounds.* Yet, still the lavish expenditure of Buckingham was inadequately supplied. This was a grievous source of vexation to one whose unbounded love of display was gracefully connected with a passion for the arts, and with an exquisite perception of all that was excellent in painting and grand in sculpture.

Another cause of irritation, and consequent ill-health, was the incessant exertion incident to his station and employments. Never did any minister conduct himself with greater courtesy to those who waited upon him than Buckingham, to whom vulgar report assigned great arrogance of deportment, and whose haughty bearing has passed

⁵³ State Papers.

* To the Earl of Carlisle, 22,000 crowns. To the Earl of Holland, 20,000 crowns. Sir G. Young had a diamond from the King worth 2,000 francs; from the queen-mother one of 300*l.*, and curious plate to the value of 12,000*l.*—State Papers, 1624.

almost into a proverb. His attention to his minutest duties as Lord High Admiral, his deportment to his officers when he commanded at Rochelle, will be hereafter insisted upon. Lord Clarendon speaks of his "sweet attractive manner;" of his "art of drawing or flowing unto him of the best instruments of experience and knowledge, to seek what might be for the public, or his own proper use;"⁵⁴ yet, in spite of this admirable patience, in spite of that habitual good nature, which made him a "fair spoken gentleman, not prone and eager to detract openly from any man,"⁵⁵ Buckingham was harassed almost to insanity by the hourly ingress of importunate suitors, or of clamorous complainants. Even the visits of the friendly oppress us, when the brain is in a state of excitement; and, accordingly, we read without surprize that he was obliged occasionally to retire altogether from the court, retreating, most frequently, to Newhall, his favourite seat, "to avoid importunity of visits that would give him no rest. It had even, at one time, been given out by the Roman Catholics, who were incensed against him, by the failure of the Spanish embassy, that he was "crazed in his brain;" but "I have learned," writes Mr. Chamberlain, "by them that

⁵⁴ Parallel. *Reliquiae Wotton.*, p. 172.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 174.

know, that there was no such matter, but that the suspicion grew by reason of his often letting blood ; only they confess he hath a spent body and not like to hold out long, if he do not tend his health very diligently.”⁵⁶

Shortly after his return from France, the Duke’s affairs appear to have become so greatly involved as to oblige him to retire for a time, from York House, to the seclusion of Burleigh-on-the-Hill. The following letter from his Duchess is addressed to Mrs. Olivia Porter, her niece, and the wife of Endymion Porter, that trusty servant to whom Buckingham had assigned the charge of bringing over his jewels and plate from Spain.* Mrs. Olivia Porter appears to have been a cherished companion, as well as kinswoman, of the Duchess of Buckingham’s. The letter is given in its original state, with regard to orthography ; it is dated, “Burghley, 18th July, 1625.

“ DERE CUSEN,

“ Doctor Nure will tell you how I am. I have sent the doctor’s leter to him. I am

“ Letter from Mr. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton. In edited State Papers, June 13th, 1624.

* In the State Paper Office there are several letters from Endymion Porter to his wife, written in the inflated style of love letters of that period, which the curious in such matters will find in the Domestic Papers, 1624, 1625.

in good health, I thank God, and I hope in the end I shall be as well as ever I was. I pray, pray for me. Remember me to your husband and sonne, and I do not doubt but what we shall be merry again in York House. Fairfill is now sould, I thank God, and we shall, by living here a while, redeme our selfs out of debt, I hope in Jesus. Farewell, swett cuse,

“Your most constant friend,

“K. BUCKINGHAM.

“My Co: (cousin) remembers his services to you.”

Buckingham appears thus to have taken the most effectual means to recover his serenity—retirement and economy; but the great duties of his station would not suffer him long to rest, either at Newhall or at the still more remote retreat of Burleigh. There, indeed, he was not permitted to hide himself until after he had assisted at the solemnity of the declaration of the King’s marriage, which was held in the Banqueting House at Whitehall in the following order.⁵⁷ After it was concluded, the King conducted the Queen to her presence chamber, where she dined. The King returned to the banqueting chamber, where he dined with the three French ambassadors, the

⁵⁷ On the 22nd of June, 1625. I have not found this account in any of our historians.—State Papers, inedited.

Duc de Chevreuse, Villeach, and the Marquis de Fite. At the second course the heralds came, and proclaimed the King's titles, craved a largesse, and afterwards went to the Queen's side, and did the same. The Queen went to the Banqueting House afterwards, and the evening was spent in dancing. On the following day the Duke of Buckingham dined with the Duc de Chevreuse at Nonsuch, and supped that evening at York House, giving there one of those sumptuous entertainments which must have added so much to his pecuniary difficulties. For the ambassadors were received at that noble dwelling with "such magnificence and plenty, that the like," writes a contemporary, "hath not been seen in these parts. One rare dish came by mere chance: a sturgeon of full five feet long, that afternoon, not far from the place, leaping in a gentleman's boat, was served in at supper."*

During all this time, the pestilence was raging with fearful results; yet the people could not find in their hearts to leave London when the brave doings in celebration of the Queen's arrival went

* Sturgeon, as well as whales, were excepted from the other great fishes, sea dogs, called royal fishes, to which the Lord High Admiral laid claim, when they came near the shore by right.—See Chamberlayne's State of England, p. 81.

on. It was observed that "in all these shews and feastings, there hath been such excessive bravery on all sides, as bred rather a surfeit than delights in them that saw it, and it were more fit and would better become us to compare and dispute with such pompous kind of people in iron and steel, than in gold and riches, wherein we come not near them."

In addition to this insulting remark, one even still more disparaging to the strangers was publicly thrown out. The accession even of the high-bred Frenchwomen was considered to add little to the grace of the courtly revels at York House or elsewhere. Her retinue appears to have inspired neither admiration nor respect.

"The Queen hath brought, they say, such a poor, pitiful sort of women, that there is not one worth the looking after, saving herself and the Duchess of Chevreuse, who, though she be fair, paints foully. Among her priests you would little look for M. Sausy, that went an ambassador to Constantinople when we were at Venice, and is now become a *padre del oratorio*."⁵⁸

The public heard with disgust that two hundred pounds a day were allowed for the maintenance of the Duc and Duchesse de Chevreuse, in Denmark

⁵⁸ Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, June 25.—State Papers inedited.

House, "for victuals and comforts."⁵⁹ Buckingham, meantime, passed the remainder of the year 1625 at Hampton Court, his duchess staying at Burleigh, where her father, the Earl of Rutland, remained to solace her retirement, for we find him excusing himself from attendance at Court on that plea.⁶⁰ Buckingham experienced considerable inconvenience from the absence and illness of the Earl of Purbeck, who, of all his brothers, seems to have enjoyed the most of his confidence; referring to him all suitors who were obliged, to adopt the quaint phrase of the time, to "come in at that door."⁶¹

⁵⁹ Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, June 25.—State Papers inedited.

⁶⁰ State Papers, for 1625.

⁶¹ Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, Jan. 1, 1619-20.

CHAPTER VI.

UNJUST APPRECIATION OF BUCKINGHAM'S CHARACTER—
HIS ENERGY IN RESPECT TO THE NAVY—SIR WALTER
RALEIGH'S WORKS ON MARITIME AFFAIRS—PRINCE
HENRY'S PREDILECTION FOR THEM—HIS MINIATURE
SHIP—HIS DEATH—LORD NOTTINGHAM'S NEGLECT AND
VENALITY—HIS POWERS—£60,000, YEARLY, ALLOTTED
FOR THE NAVY—BUCKINGHAM'S EFFORTS—EXAMPLE
SET BY RICHELIEU—IGNORANCE OF SHIP-BUILDING IN
THOSE DAYS—BUCKINGHAM DRAWS UP A PLAN OF
DEFENCE—FEAR OF THE SPANISH ARMADA—THE DUKE
PROPOSES TO FORM A COMPANY FOR THE WEST, AS
WELL AS THE EAST INDIES—PLAN OF TAXATION—ALSO
OF DEFENCE ON SHORE.

Happily for the reputation which has been thus maligned, numerous documents,⁶³ which have of late been rescued from neglect, abundantly prove that Buckingham achieved one important benefit to his country—the restoration of the British navy. Whatever may have been his motives, by what means soever he may have compassed his ends, there can now be no doubt but that to him we owe the re-establishment of that mighty power to which we are indebted for our existence as a nation, and it may be presumed that had his life been prolonged his exertions in this respect would have produced still more apparent effects; and that the country would have acknowledged, in after ages, the services which it seems to have overlooked.

During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the merchant ships were considered to constitute the principal part of our maritime power; they then amounted to one hundred and thirty-five, many of them of

⁶³ Those in the State Paper Office, to which Mr. Lechmere the Keeper, and Mr. Lemon the Deputy Keeper, first directed my attention; and to those gentlemen I am, therefore, wholly indebted for any new view of Buckingham's character which these remarks, and those which are to follow, may afford. The Domestic Papers have been within the last few years completely arranged, and an accurate calendar made of them, by which the historical reader may derive the greatest possible assistance.

five hundred tons each. The ships of war belonging to the Crown were thirteen only in number, so that the navy, so boasted and renowned, was composed chiefly of merchant ships which were hired for the queen's service.⁶⁴

King James, on his accession to the crown of England, called in all the ships of war as well as the numerous privateers belonging to the English merchants, and declared himself "at peace with all the world." This was certainly not the means by which the navy was to be improved and maintained. It was, nevertheless, increased in his reign to nearly double the number of Queen Elizabeth's ships of war; namely, from thirteen to twenty-four.⁶⁵

In the very commencement of James's reign the far-sighted Sir Walter Ralegh discerned the dangerous condition of a sea-girt country devoid of its proper defences; he perceived how ruinous this system of curtailment of what was essential, accompanied by the most lavish excesses in many things of trivial import, must prove; and he placed before his sovereign a manuscript essay,

⁶⁴ Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. ii., p. 140.

⁶⁵ The largest of Queen Elizabeth's ships, at her death, was of 1,000 tons, carrying 340 mariners and 40 cannon; the smallest, of 600 tons, carrying 150 mariners and 30 cannon; besides the hired vessels.—Macpherson's History of Commerce,

entitled, "Observations concerning the trade and commerce of England with the Dutch and other nations." The design of this work was to show how supinely England suffered other nations to carry away the commerce of the world, by her neglect of maritime affairs. This was one of eight treatises that Ralegh wrote on maritime affairs ; being, as he proudly announces, "the first author, either ancient or modern, that had ever treated this subject."⁶⁶

Although these works have long since been obsolete, and the practices recommended in them superseded by modern invention, they afford a curious view of the progress of navigation, and of those arts and sciences with which it is connected ; to say nothing of the wonderful amount of knowledge which they display, and of the powerful intellect portrayed in every page written by this great man.

His eloquence, however, was powerless as far as James was concerned ; but stimulated a far more comprehensive mind than that of the pedant king. Several of these essays were addressed to Prince Henry, whose awakened mind perceived his father's blindness, and comprehended the value of that which James cast away. Whilst James, forgetting that Elizabeth had checked the Spanish

* Hist. World, lib. 5, cap. 1, sect. 6.

Armada by her reliance, not on her own ten ships, but on the far better appointed merchant vessels—that she had rested, not on the size of her fleet, but on the material which composed it—he curtly dismissed his maritime auxiliaries, and, discharging the privateers from any bond to assist him for the future, slept soundly, it may be presumed, on his pillow at Westminster, congratulating himself on having set an example to all Christendom, whilst he had, in fact, almost invited another Armada to invade our shores.

Nevertheless, the progress of society was stronger than the royal will. “The seventeenth century,” thus writes Macpherson, in his History of Commerce, “may be said, from its commencement, to approach to modern times, whether considered in a political light, or in respect to riches, knowledge, or religion.”

In the celebrated treatise which Ralegh presented to his sovereign, he recommended that the “land should be made powerful by the increasing of ships and mariners;” and that such “order in commerce should be established, that the havens of England should be full of ships, the ships full of mariners.” It is singular to find the language of the seventeenth century so singularly according with that of the nineteenth.

His counsels failed to convince the self-

opinionated James, but they incited the courage of a boy, who, amid his playthings, listened to the voice of Raleigh, and imbibed his sentiments; and the important measures which were disregarded by men in authority, were promoted by the fancy and favour of a precocious child. Henry, Prince of Wales, that short-lived “type and mould of an heir-apparent,” delighted in maritime pursuits; he brought again into vogue the fast-declining spirit of enterprize. The citizens of London, as they were rowed in their stately barges by White-hall stairs, saw, with satisfaction, the royal embryo-hero disporting himself with the launch of a ship—twenty-eight feet long only, to be sure, and twelve feet broad, but built by Phineas Pett, one of the ablest shipwrights of his time. Ten years rolled away; the boy, who, at nine years of age, loved his miniature frigate as a toy, became sensible that the days of amusement were past, and that those of actual business were about to commence. He resolved to visit that then-neglected dock-yard at Woolwich, which has since become a wonder of the world. The Prince there honoured an entertainment, given by the ship’s company of the “Royal Anne,” with his presence. Phineas Pett attended his young patron, and the result of that day’s inspection was of great importance to the interests of the navy.

Some years had then elapsed since a new ship had been built. In 1609, James actually ordered and completed the construction of the "Prince Royal," a vessel far superior to any that had yet appeared in the Thames; it carried sixty-four cannon, and was of fourteen hundred tons burden. From this standard, we may infer how miserable had been the previous state of naval force, such a ship being, in our time, the smallest of those admitted into the line-of-battle. It was then regarded as one of the most extraordinary productions of native skill and of royal munificence, and was the theme of praise amid an astonished and adulatory court.

The young Prince next conceived an excellent project. He recommended his father to order the construction of ships to be carried on in Ireland, not only that the natives might be employed, but also because materials were cheaper in the sister island. The King's shipwrights approved of this plan, and the Lord High Admiral, a doting old functionary, the most ancient servant of the crown then encumbering the service, actually countenanced the enlightened idea. It was not, however, matured; and another scheme, not so practical, but still of the utmost importance to the science of navigation, was frustrated, for the time, by the death of Henry. This was the

discovery of the north-west passage, which was, nevertheless, attempted in 1612 ; but the ear of the gifted youth, whose patronage had fostered the design, was unhappily closed in death before the return of Captain Bretton, the first of the adventurous band of heroes who have attempted the gallant enterprize.

Still improvement was not wholly retarded. The incorporation of the East India Company (in 1613), gave a new impetus to navigation, and everything appeared favourable to the navy, except that branch of the government. Lord Nottingham seemed to consider his important office as a sinecure, except in regard to his privileges and perquisites. His dominion comprehended—to use the actual words which described it—"the government of all things done upon the sea-coast, in any part of the world ; of all ports and havens, and over all rovers below the first bridge next below the sea." He was a sort of mortal Neptune ; his privileges were thus defined:—"All penalties, of all transgressions, on sea or on shore, were his ; the goods of pirates and of felons at sea were his ; all stray wrecks were his ; deodands, and the share of all lawful prizes not to be granted to lords of manors, were his." It may be easily conceived what ceaseless fighting and squabbling, what corruption, litiga-

tion, and oppression were the result of an authority which was so little controlled by the discussions of Parliament in those days, or by the honour and conscience of individuals in power. So long as the Earl of Nottingham slumbered over his duties, dreaming, doubtless, of delightful shipwrecks and desirable transgressions and piracies, the navy, of course, was not augmented. Sixty thousand pounds a-year had then been allotted to that shadow of a shade, the naval service; but the only time that the naval service was recalled to the memory of King James, was when the octogenarian, Lord Nottingham, appeared at Court in his full-dress uniform. Most people began to think that the Lord High Admiral was immortal; but, happily for the country, old age fairly captured him at last; he died, and made room for the Duke of Buckingham to step into all his beloved privileges and perquisites, which, in truth, the Duke also too well appreciated. It soon became a question what had become of all the sixty thousand pounds yearly which had been granted for the naval service, for there seemed to be scarcely any navy whatsoever. Buckingham, in his new office, however, displayed qualities for which the world had given him little credit. One of his first steps was to drag poor King James, aguish, peevish, and prejudiced as he was, to Deptford,

to see how little there was there to be seen. His next, to get commissioners appointed to superintend the construction of new vessels, and the repairs of old ones, the sum allotted to them being cut down to thirty thousand pounds, for which consideration they were to build two new ships yearly. Cardinal Richelieu had also endeavoured to remedy the neglect of his predecessors in power, and to support a widely-extended commerce, the only channels of which are on the wide ocean. In his concern for maritime affairs, he set the first example of energy to Buckingham. From this era, therefore, may be traced the rise of our modern naval service in importance; the very vices of both these favourites of fortune, of Richelieu on the one hand, and of Buckingham on the other, had the effect of virtues under certain circumstances. To their lavish expenditure, to their fearlessness of responsibility, to their boundless ambition, France and England owe the maintenance of their maritime power, and the restoration of their national defences.

Numberless obstacles, of course, occurred at the very outset of the Duke of Buckingham's undertakings in England; one of the great impediments was the ignorance which prevailed in those days of the proper mode of building ships of battle. The shipwrights were unaccustomed

to construct any vessels but such as were intended to carry merchandise. There was a certain man, named Burwell, who had been employed by the East India Company, and who was so distinguished for his skill as a shipwright that he was entrusted to build for the British navy. He committed a grand error in the very first ship that he launched, because, to make use of the language of a contemporary historian,⁶⁷ "he did not observe the difference between the merchant ships and the King's ships, the one made for stowage, the other only for strength and magnificence."

On his accession, Charles I. renewed his father's warrant granted to twelve commissioners of the navy ; and the exigencies of the times, and the probability of a speedy war with Spain, stimulated the exertions of the Lord Admiral and the generosity of the country. Spain was preparing the finest armament that had ever left her shores ; and an invasion on the part of that power was openly threatened, and almost anticipated, even by the stout-hearted English.

Buckingham then drew up a plan of assault, as well as of defence, in order to lower the pride of the enemy. A company was, he proposed, to be incorporated for the West, as well as for the East Indies. A fleet, consisting of two ships of

⁶⁷. Bishop Goodman's Life of King James I.

the line, eighteen ships and two pinnaces of the merchant-adventurers, was to be equipped, and to this force were to be added twenty Newcastle ships, for the nautical skill and gallant characteristics of the collier crews were wisely resorted to in this emergency by the Lord Admiral. To meet the expenses of the fleet, a general subscription of all estates of men was proposed. The nobility were each to contribute a hundred pounds; the gentlemen and yeomen were to be taxed to a certain amount; cities and corporate bodies were to give a sum of twenty-four thousand pounds. The merchants and the East India Company were not to escape the general infliction. Thus, to man and to furnish the first great fleet that England had sent forth, was the principle of arbitrary taxation commenced in this country.

At the same time, with the fear of Spanish Armadas, of conquest, torture, and slavery, acting upon the public mind, efforts to restore the national defences on shore were promptly carried on.

In those days, pirates infested the narrow seas; and all the seaport towns were taxed, in order to support a sort of coast-guard to keep off these troublesome visitors. But every usage which could ensure public safety had been neglected.

Our national defences had fallen into decay simultaneously with our navy. The correspondence between Buckingham and his agents in different ports exists in the State Paper Office, and affords a mournful picture of forts neglected and in ruins. Shoals, and sands, and points, fatal even to the most experienced mariners, were the snare and gulf of many a vessel, and not a single light-house had been erected to warn the navigator of his danger. The office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, which, in part of the reign of James the First, devolved on Lord Zouch, had been conducted with scarcely more zeal and honesty than the post of Lord High Admiral by the Earl of Nottingham. Until the stirring exertions of the ill-fated Duke of Buckingham were directed both to the augmentation of the naval armaments and to their preservation from risks, the Goodwin Sands were without a light-house; and a project for erecting one upon that dangerous passage was first suggested to Buckingham by Sir Thomas Wildrake, and subsequently adopted by the Duke, whose efforts to guard the narrow seas, and to clear them of pirates, are beyond all praise, when we consider the supineness of his predecessors in office. It was not until 1619 that a light was placed upon the Lizard Point, which had already

the most salutary effect.⁷¹ We have seen that during the reign of James the First the number of ships of war was nearly doubled ; and it is due to Buckingham to state that almost the whole of this increase was the result of his exertions.

The young Lord High Admiral had declared, at his outset, that his inexperience almost disqualified him for that important position to which the partiality of his Sovereign had promoted him ; but it was soon perceived that his very wilfulness and impetuosity, and his liberal notions of expense, were almost virtues under certain circumstances. The Dutch were our great maritime rivals ; for France had no naval armament ; and although the contemptuous assertion of Voltaire, that Louis the Thirteenth had not, at his accession, one ship of war, is false, yet he might be said almost to be destitute of naval force, so poor and ill-provided were his vessels, and so incompetent and miserable his seamen. It became Buckingham's pride to outvie all continental nations in naval power. The design might have been ascribed to his animosity in the event of the treaty with

⁷¹ A note of the charge of the fleet, among the undated papers in the State Paper Office, probably 1625, computes it at 65,656*l.* Our Navy Force had then been considerably augmented. Some of the items are as follow :—"For bringing of the King's shippes into full equipage, for clothes for the men, for impress for surgeons."

Spain, against that kingdom; but it is clear that he cherished it whilst the British nation was at peace with all the world, and that his schemes of improvement were formed before.

Charles the First renewed his father's commission to twelve commissioners of the navy. These were, at present, confined to three distinct branches; such as a comptroller, a surveyor, a clerk of the navy. They were subordinate, in Buckingham's time, to the Lord High Admiral, and afterwards to the Admiralty Board, from whom they were to receive directions.⁷² During the short period of Buckingham's rule, after the accession of Charles, much was effected, more still was planned.

It was not merely with ambitious views that Buckingham had obtained the post of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. An active and liberal hand was required to restore our national defences, which had fallen to decay simultaneously with our navy. In all matters the Duke of Buckingham himself interfered; most of the letters on important affairs are addressed to him directly, not through his secretaries; and most of the epistles appear to have received immediate replies, which, it is to be regretted, are dispersed and extinct. On more

⁷² Macpherson's History of Commerce.

than one occasion, tributes to the Duke's impartiality and energy are proffered. "I am yet comforted," writes a suitor, "that your grace is so wise and just as to ask account of every man's part, and where you find most fault, there to lay most censure."⁷³ Sometimes "my lady of Buckingham," as she is designated in one of the letters on naval affairs, is employed as a mediator, as in the case of Sir Thomas Aylesbury, who, wishing to pass the ship "Sea Horse," obtained a warrant through her interest.

As Buckingham progressed in experience, and his views became more enlarged, his enthusiasm for naval affairs increased; and was, doubtless, heightened by the knowledge that Cardinal Richelieu, who, amongst his other titles, enjoyed that of High Admiral of France,⁷⁴ and who thought it no shame to wear the badge of office over his cardinal's robes, and famous hair shirt beneath, supported commerce, the very channels of which are on the wide ocean. These considerations were, early in the reign of Charles the First, strengthened and brought into play by the certainty of a speedy war with Spain.

But it is reasonable to infer that the example

⁷³ Domestic Papers. Letters from J. Burgh, dated Plymouth, January 8, 1628.

⁷⁴ Macpherson, 339.

and the works of Sir Walter Ralegh still held their influence over society, as they had done over the dawning intellect of Henry, Prince of Wales. The immature projects of that royal youth, suggested, it is probable, by the spirit of enterprise to which Ralegh had sacrificed his own interests, were now revived by Buckingham. King Charles co-operated with him in these earnest endeavours to carry out the discovery of the north-west passage to China, "an action," says Macpherson, "of great importance to trade and navigation, and in sundry respects of singular benefit to all our realms and dominions."⁷⁵ As a reward for this undertaking, Buckingham received a present from King Charles of one of his pinnaces;⁷⁶ but death put a stop to these public-spirited endeavours.

The period of Buckingham's administration over the Admiralty affairs was, however, one of incessant activity, carried on, as is shown by correspondence in the State Paper Office, almost to the last hour of his life. It seems idle to adduce the language of panegyric to support a statement, else might we refer to the verses addressed by Carew "to my Lord Admiral, on his late sickness and recovery," in which he alludes to

⁷⁵ Macpherson, iv., 4, 877.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

“Sorrow like that which touched our hearts of late ;
Your pining sickness and your restless pain,
At once the land affecting, and the main :
When the glad news that you were Admiral
Scarce through the nation spread, 'twas feared by all
That our great Charles, whose wisdom shines in you,
Should be perplexed how to chuse a new.”

It was not until the year 1624, after the rupture of the Spanish treaty, that Buckingham could have been fully aware of all the responsibilities of his post. There were then great complaints of want of shipping ; the Spanish nation, it was said, setting out one of the finest fleets that had ever been seen.⁷⁷ To meet the terrors of what Buckingham termed “the pretended Spanish invasion,” he drew up a list of propositions, whereby the pride of the enemy was to be lowered, and the supremacy of England maintained. First, as the plan went, the enemy “was to be entertained in successive fleets upon his own coasts, which were to destroy his shipping, to intercept his provisions, to hinder him from gathering a heading wherat to possess some place of accompt.”

Secondly, the Spaniard was to be assailed in the West Indies ;—to intercept his fleets, to invade his possessions, to fortify garrisons, and to establish

⁷⁷ Inedited Letter from Sir J. Hippesley, Jan. 19, 1625. Calendar, vol. cxxxix., No. 18.

there government confederacies. This, as Buckingham planned, was to be undertaken, at the common charge of the kingdom, by a company "incorporated for the West, as there already is for the East;" and the naval force was to consist of a fleet composed of two ships of the line, eighteen ships, and two pinnaces of the merchant adventurers.

The King's ships were to be manned with twenty seamen and fifty soldiers, the merchants' with sixty seamen and one hundred soldiers, the pinnaces with twenty seamen. To this armament was to be added twenty Newcastle ships, each with thirty seamen and one hundred soldiers a-piece, making in all 2,120 seamen and 3,900 landsmen.

Parliament was to be applied to in each estate for a general subscription. The nobility at the rate of 100*l.* a man, to be paid in two years—this, it was computed, would amount to 4,900*l.* (60,000*l.*); the gentry and yeomen, 150,000*l.*; the cities and corporate towns, 24,000*l.*; the six confederate companies of merchants, including the East India "companies, may," as the author of this plan remarked, "well contribute."⁷⁸ To the principle of this scheme of Buckingham's may be traced the origin of many subsequent discontents. In his ardour for achieving the power of England,

⁷⁸ Domestic State Papers, inedited, dated April 14, 1625.

or perhaps, in part, for avenging affronts which he might consider as almost personal, he forgot all constitutional rights. The remark of Bolingbroke occurs to the mind, on reading this plan of arbitrary and almost indiscriminate taxation. Buckingham, says that writer, "had, in his own days, and he hath in ours, the demerits of beginning a struggle between prerogative and privilege, and of establishing a sort of warfare between the prince and the people."⁷⁹

On the first of April, 1624, Buckingham addressed the committee of both Houses, assembled in the painted chamber. The object of his speech was to press the necessity of raising a loan of 100,000*l.* to fit out the navy. Buckingham had, by this time, fully determined upon a war with Spain, not, as Roger Coke expresses it, for the "recovery of the Palatinate," but to express his hatred against Olivarez, and, therefore, "a fleet must be rigged up."⁸⁰ According to the Duke's account of the matter, upon the breaking off of the treaty with Spain, he was commanded by His Majesty to take a survey of the navy, and to prepare it for "all occasions." Upon conferring with the "officers thereof concerning their reparation," Buckingham was informed that a very large sum would be re-

⁷⁹ Remarks on History, vol. ii., p. 220, Letter XX.

⁸⁰ Coke's Delection, vol. ii., p. 188.

quisite to furnish the fleet with necessaries and crews. No means could be suggested of raising the adequate sum. "My lords and gentlemen," said the Duke, "His Majesty has imposed a great trust on me in this office of Admiralty, and I can do nothing without money. Such monies as I have of my own I will most willingly expend in this service, but that alone will do no good without future assistance."

He then expounded his plan; that which has already been detailed, of levying a tax on the three estates for the expenses of the fleet, appears for the time to have been abandoned. He now recommended their sending for "monied men," to raise a loan, of which, he assured them, not one penny should be applied to any other purpose than the one mentioned.⁸¹ "And let me tell you," he added in conclusion, "that you have great reason to take this into a present and careful consideration, for I have lately been advertised, by letters from Spain, that they have now in readiness a great fleet, exceeding that of eighty-eight, with provisions of 200 or 220 of flat-bottom boats, to serve them in this their intended designs; and the Spaniards have of late so intruded upon our coasts, that they have taken an English ship in the face of us. This was advertised by a ser-

⁸¹ Inedited State Papers, dated April 1, 1624.

vant of mine own, who spake with the pilot who was in that ship when it was taken."

This application was followed by immediate efforts to restore the British navy; the numerous documents in the State Paper Office, to which reference has been made, most completely contradict the assertion of one of Buckingham's bitterest enemies, Roger Coke, that after "Buckingham became Lord Admiral, the English navy lay unarmed, and fit for Spain; that he neglected the guarding of the seas, whereby the trade of the nation not only decayed, but the seas became ignominiously infested by pirates and enemies, to the loss of very many of the merchants and subjects of England."⁸²

With regard to pirates, most of the ports were taxed in King James's time, by way of contribution, to prevent them; and little more could be done until the navy was repaired and augmented. There are innumerable letters manifesting Buckingham's extreme care to clear the Channel from pirates. The light erected on the Lizard Point, as Sir J. Killigrew, in a letter to Sir Dudley Carleton, then ambassador at the Hague, remarked, "might speak itself to most parts of Christendom."⁸³ The

⁸² Inedited State Papers, Domestic, 1623.

⁸³ Letter from Sir J. Killigrew to Sir D. Carleton, December 12th, 1619, and February, 1619-20. Inedited

forts and defences were inspected, and many oversights in Lord Zouch's wardenship remedied. Such were Buckingham's exertions. His contemporaries were singularly ungrateful to him for the benefits which he laboured to procure them; but posterity experienced their effects. Thirty years after his time, Pepys thus comments upon the improvement in our naval force, as a popular theme of remark—"Sir William Compton I heard talk with great pleasure of the difference between the fleet now and in Queene Elizabeth's days, when, in '88, she had but thirty-six sail, great and small, in the world, and ten rounds of powder was their allowance against the Spaniard."⁸⁴

Among the articles of Buckingham's subsequent impeachment, in 1626, there was inserted the following statement:—"The East India Company having, in 1624, loaded four ships and two pinnaces for India, the Lord High Admiral, knowing that they must lose their voyage unless they sailed on a certain day, extorted from them the sum of ten thousand pounds for liberty to sail for India." Upon being charged with this act of tyranny, the Duke justified himself by the plea that the Company had captured several rich State Papers. By the same letter it appears that it cost ten shillings a night to supply the light.

⁸⁴ Pepys's Diary, 3rd edition, vol. ii., p. 31.

prizes from the Portuguese at Ormuz and elsewhere, and that a large portion of the plunder was due to the King, and also to himself as High Admiral ; and he proved that the sum said to be extorted from the Company was given by way of compromise, instead of 15,000*l.*, which was legally due ; and he was able to show that the whole sum, except two hundred pounds, was appropriated by the King for the use of the navy.⁸⁵

One fact was soon acknowledged, that even King James the First had a stronger and more magnificent navy than any of his predecessors. It is worthy of remark, that such was the comparative ignorance of the times in ship-building, that when a shipwright named Bunnell, who had been employed by the East India Company, was brought, on account of his pre-eminence, into the British navy, “he was mistaken in the construction of the first ship that he built for the King;” because, as Bishop Goodman relates, “he did not observe the difference between the merchant ships and the King’s ships—the one made for stowage, the other only for strength and magnificence.”⁸⁶

Such was the state of our maritime affairs at the accession of Charles the First. The object to which all these preparations were destined was

⁸⁵ Macpherson’s History of Commerce, vol. iv., p. 317.

⁸⁶ Bishop Goodman’s Memoirs, vol i., p. 55.

soon apparent. Trifling as this naval force appeared in those days, it was deemed magnificent in the reign of the Stuart Kings.

CHAPTER VII.

UNFORTUNATE RESULT OF THE PRINCIPLES EARLY INSTILLED INTO CHARLES I. BY HIS FATHER—THE AFFAIR OF THE PALATINATE—ITS CONNECTION WITH THE SPANISH MARRIAGE—MAD DESIRE OF CHARLES AND BUCKINGHAM FOR A WAR WITH SPAIN—LETTER FROM THE EARL OF BRISTOL—THE FIRST UNFORTUNATE EXPEDITION TO CADIZ—RESENTMENT OF THE PEOPLE—CHARLES ASSEMBLES A PARLIAMENT—THE SUPPLIES REFUSED—IMPEACHMENT OF BRISTOL—IMPEACHMENT OF BUCKINGHAM—HIS THIRTEEN ANSWERS—RASH CONDUCT OF THE KING—HIS EXPRESSION OF CONTEMPT FOR THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—SIR JOHN ELIOT AND SIR DUDLEY DIGGES SENT TO THE TOWER—THE INTOLERANT SPIRIT OF THE DAY—INFLUENCE OF LAUD—SERMON OF THE VICAR OF BRACKLEY—“TUNING THE PULPITS.”



CHAPTER VII.

THE next mission entrusted to Buckingham was one which, accompanied by the Earl of Holland, he undertook to the States-General, who had bound themselves to restore by force of arms the Palatinate to the King's only sister, Elizabeth of Bohemia, "whose dowry," Sir Henry Wotton observes, "had been ravished by the German eagle mixed with Spanish feathers." "A princess," he adds, "resplendent in darkness, and whose virtues were born within the chance, but without the power, of fortune."

This mission occupied a month. The Duke and Lord Holland embarked at Harwich, and after a dangerous passage, in the course of which three ships were foundered, they arrived on the fifth day at Harwich. It was during the absence of Buckingham that the unfortunate expedition to

Cadiz failed, and the public expressions of disappointment at that misfortune were the first news to greet him on his return.

It was at this period that the seeds of many of the erroneous and unjustifiable principles of action which were originally implanted in the mind of Charles I. by his father, and which had been fostered by Buckingham, were seen to produce their first effects ; and that the long course of mistakes and oppressions which preceded the great Rebellion was commenced.

In order to comprehend the manner in which the complicated questions of foreign policy in those days affected the line of conduct adopted by England, it will be necessary to refer briefly to the question which was the grand theme of the day—the loss of the Palatinate.

The misfortunes of Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, her rare qualities, and her romantic story, are well known by every one conversant with English history. The affairs connected with the Palatinate afford the first instance in which Great Britain was involved in the politics of Germany, and with the various religious parties into which that country was divided.

In 1612, a league had been cemented between this country and the German Protestants, by the marriage of Elizabeth Stuart with Frederic, the

Elector Palatine. Bohemia, persecuted by the Emperor Mathias of Austria, had invited the Elector Palatine to accept the crown, which was elective, under a conviction that Frederic, being supported by an alliance with England, would support them in their struggles with the intolerant Catholic Council who governed the kingdom of Bohemia.

A fearful conflict ensued. The German States, entrusting the management of their affairs to thirty directors, composed wholly of Protestant Princes, were opposed by the Catholic League, formed with a view of upholding the Jesuits in opposition to the Hussites, or Protestants, or, as they were sometimes styled, the Evangelical party, by whose preponderance the Elector Palatine had been called to the throne.

Relying upon the cordial sympathy of the English nation, an expectation in which he was not disappointed, the Prince Palatine, believing himself equally sure of the co-operation of King James, accepted the tempting offer of royalty without waiting for the approval of his father-in-law. But he looked to him for support in vain. It was one of King James's most cherished notions, that monarchs should support monarchs in case of disturbance, how just soever the cause, how unanimous soever the voice of the people by

whom a sovereign was deposed. His natural timidity, also, operated in inducing a line of conduct towards his son-in-law and his daughter as pusillanimous as was every other trait of his character and action of his life—and, above all, his project of accomplishing a union between his son Charles and a daughter of Spain militated against a real and effective interference in the affairs of the Palatinate, except, indeed, to confuse and ruin them. He was contented, therefore, with sending ambassadors to Germany, not only to mediate between contending parties, but to induce the new King of Bohemia to relinquish a throne which James pretended to assert that his son-in-law had no right to retain.²⁷

The King of Poland, the Elector of Saxony, and the Duke of Bavaria, who was at the head of the Catholic League, sided with Ferdinand, Emperor after the death of Mathias, and the result was the reduction of Bohemia, the loss of the Palatinate, and the flight of the Elector Palatine, or, as he was called, the King of Bohemia, to Holland. The King of Spain, also, sent an army under Spinola into the field, and it was that circumstance which rendered the scheme of marrying Prince Charles to the Infanta so unpopular in

²⁷ Brodie's Constitutional History of the British Empire, vol. ii. p. 8.

England, and which brought so much odium on Buckingham.

The treaty for that match had been originally carried on through the agency of the Earl of Bristol, and hence the jealousy which had already broken out on various occasions between the Duke of Buckingham and that able and experienced ambassador; whilst the failure of the negotiations, which were undertaken with the pretext of gaining the restoration of the Palatinate, was the origin of the rash war with Spain, which Charles, without the usual form of a proclamation, resolved on commencing.

The English, however, delighted as they had been at the rupture of the treaty, were indignant at this informality, as well as averse to a war which seemed to be the result of private passions rather than the well-considered act of a monarch anxious for the dignity of his subjects.

But a worthy representative of James's style of policy remained in his unhappy son. Supplies for the war with Spain were refused in the first Parliament that Charles called; a compulsory loan was exacted. Whilst the country was burning with resentment at this unequally imposed burden, a fleet of eighty sail, English, and twenty sail supplied from Holland, carrying ten thousand men, was sent to the coast of

Spain. This grand armament, raised by the energy of the Lord High Admiral, was an object of pride to the nation, who had never before beheld so glorious a fleet; yet it was entrusted, not to Sir Robert Mansel, a distinguished commander, but to Cecil, Viscount Wimbleton, a favourite of Buckingham's, and a man neither of talent nor experience. Thus, the fatal vice which has obtained the popular name of jobbery was exhibited at this most critical period.

A signal failure was the result; the fleet reached Cape St. Vincent, and landed the troops; a fort was taken, but there was neither discipline nor decision to restrain the troops, who rushed into a store of wine, and soon abandoned themselves to the most disgraceful excesses. Sickness was the consequence, and the expedition returned ingloriously to England, with the additional discredit of its being known that a stay of two days longer would have sufficed to take all the shipping collected into the bay of Cadiz, and thus to have struck a grand blow, at the very commencement of the war, against the power of Spain.

The blame of this unfortunate attempt rested chiefly on the head of Buckingham, as the undertaking was known to have originated in his advice. Lord Clarendon well observes, in his life of himself, speaking of the Stuart family, that it was

their “unhappy fate and constitution” to trust to the “judgments of those who were as much inferior to themselves in understanding as they were in quality, before their own, which was very good, and suffered even their natures, which disposed them to virtue and justice, to be prevailed upon, and altered and corrupted by those who knew how to make use of some one infirmity that they discovered in them, and by complying with that, and cherishing and serving it, they, by degrees, wrought upon the mass, and sacrificed all the other good inclinations to that single vice.”

Parliament was accordingly summoned, and at Candlemas, in 1625, the coronation was celebrated. This ceremonial, which might have assisted in re-establishing good feeling, proved, unhappily, the source of bitter dissension and cavilling. The coronations of Edward VI. and of Queen Elizabeth had been performed according to the rites of the Romish Church. That of James I. was done in haste; and “wanted,” says the biographer of Laud, “many things which might have been considered in a time of leisure.”⁸⁸ Amongst the alterations suggested by the prelates who were appointed as commissioners to settle the form, it was decreed that anointing was to be performed in the form of a cross, a point established, which

⁸⁸ Heylyn’s Life of Laud, p. 145.

was at that time as fertile a source of invective as the use of that most holy and touching symbol in our churches has since been in these days, even amongst well-intentioned and pious Christians.

Even the ritual of the coronation, therefore, performed as it was, almost for the first time, according to the mode which it has since retained, contributed indirectly to the unpopularity of Buckingham. To Laud, that prelate to whose memory so much injustice has been done, in imputing to him designs and motives of which no proof exists, and yet whose errors bring pain to every thinking mind, was allotted the performance of the great ceremonial.

Formerly it had been the office of the Abbot of Westminster to celebrate the rite; then, for a century, the Dean had held the guardianship of the regalia used by Edward the Confessor, and had kept them in a secret part of Westminster Abbey. These valuables were now disinterred from their hiding-place by Laud, who, finding also the old crucifix, set it up on the altar, as in former times. Everything relating to this coronation wore an ominous appearance; in the first place, it was fixed for the day of the Purification of the Virgin Mary, and the King, whether from compliment to the faith of his wife, or from taste, or, from the supposed influence of Laud, it does not

transpire, was dressed in white, instead of purple, used always by his predecessors. "Not," says Heylyn, with quaint simplicity, "for want of purple velvet enough to make him a suit (for he had many yards of it in his outer garment), but from choice, to declare that virgin purity with which he came to be espoused unto his kingdom." His laying aside the purple was, however, looked upon as an "ill omen."⁸⁹

Nor was this the only presage of coming mis-haps. Charles was afterwards accused, during the Long Parliament, of having altered the coronation oath; the very sermon, also, preached by the eloquent Penhouse, Bishop of Carlisle, formerly his tutor, seemed to invite fate to do her worst; he chose a text, according to Heylyn, more proper for a funeral than a coronation—"I will give to thee a crown of life"—and engrafted on it a discourse which those who heard it judged might, with great propriety, have been uttered when his Majesty was dead, but not just at the moment when he was about to undertake the government of his people.

The ceremonial being concluded, the King walked in his robes from Westminster Abbey to the Hall, and delivered to Laud, who represented the Dean of Westminster, the crown, sceptre,

⁸⁹ Heylyn's Life of Laud, p. 145.

and the sword called *cortena*. Laud, after receiving the regalia, returned to the Abbey, and, placing them on the altar, offered them up in his Majesty's name; after which they were again locked up, never to see the light until after the stirring season of the Rebellion, and the more placid years of the Commonwealth. They were again displayed at the Restoration.⁹⁰

All these forms were regarded as next to impious by the Puritan party; and, since there was now a cordial alliance between Laud and Buckingham, the popular hatred was divided between them both. Two years had now passed since Buckingham, in the miseries of an ague, had sent for Laud to console and advise him. Laud was, in truth, one of the most agreeable of companions, and carried with him to his grave an apprehension quick and sudden—"a sociable wit and pleasant humour."⁹¹ So that, even in the crisis of a malady, then of a far more severe character than in the present day, Buckingham forgot his sufferings, or bore them with a patience unwonted to his irritable nature; and, "by that patience, did so break their heats and violences, that at last they left him."

After this period, Laud became, Heylyn tells

⁹⁰ Heylyn.

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 118, and *passim*.

us, "not only a confessor, but a councillor to the Duke;" and to his advice it was owing that the endowments of the Charter-house were not appropriated by the Duke to the maintenance of the war, a plan which had been contemplated by the Duke, but applied to those of education. Laud, we must in gratitude recall, opposed all alienations of that nature; and to his firmness, as well as to that of the honest-hearted Sir Edward Coke, who, as trustee to the estates called Sutton's Lands, resisted the attempts of the Crown to seize them, we owe the preservation of many colleges and hospitals.

During his intimacy with Buckingham, Laud succeeded in imbuing him with those opinions which he himself advocated during his life, and died to support. These were opposed to what was then called "*Doctrinal Puritanism*," a term which Buckingham expressed a wish to comprehend, and which Laud undertook to expound. These doctrinal points related to the observance of the Lord's Day; to the "indiscrimination," says Heylyn, "of bishops and presbyters, the power of sovereigns in ecclesiastical matters, the doctrine of confession and of sacerdotal absolution, and the five points which had, for the last twenty years, been agitating the churches of Holland."⁹² Those points, which have unhappily

⁹² Heylyn, p. 119.

raised so many bitter resentments, were now beginning to inflame the public mind in England with that fever of intolerance which is so contagious, and so inimical to true religion. These controversies, in the time of Buckingham, were carried on between the party called Arminians and the Calvinists. "A swarm of books," as Heylyn calls them, came over from Holland, and awoke out of "that dead sleep," as he terms the then state of the Church, the learned divines of Oxford. Laud had been one of the first, on the publication of these works, to espouse and to advocate what was then styled Arminianism, so called from a famous professor of Leyden, Von Armene. Whatever was the standard of Laud's opinions, and whatsoever merit may be attached to their sincerity, or what blame soever to their virulence, it is, at all events, satisfactory to believe that the attention of Buckingham was, during the latter years of his life, directed to subjects of mightier import than the sublunary interests which had hitherto solely engrossed his attention.

Laud had, indeed, those qualities which form the man of piety into the missionary of social life—a mission much required in all ages. The rigid, uncompromising priest, who gives no latitude to opinion, no indulgence to error, generally

does far more harm than good. The lax man of the world, with weak purpose, and flickering notions of right and wrong, is a scandal to the faith he professes, and lends a hand to indifference, if not to infidelity. But Laud, an enthusiast, perhaps a zealot, was the most agreeable of bigots. Born at Reading, the son of a clothier, he had been reproached, like Buckingham, with the meanness of his origin. Like most men, he felt the imputation ; and even in his garden at Lambeth, when in the height of his greatness, he is stated by his biographer, Doctor Heylyn, to have shewn no ordinary degree of vexation on his countenance, after reading a libel in which he was reproached with his parentage, "as if," he said, "he had been raked out of a dung-hill." He owned that he had not the good fortune "to be born a gentleman," but he had the happiness to be descended from honest parents. The beautiful, old-fashioned College of St. John's, at Oxford, had received him as a commoner, and he entered there at a period when Calvinism influenced, strange to say, the tone and spirit of that university. All that had once been held sacred was decaying or disused ; and the Reformed Church of England had become eclipsed by the doctrines and writings of Zuinglius, introduced by Dr. Humphrey, the then Vice-Chancellor, who had received his im-

pressions, when deprived of his fellowship by Queen Mary, at Zurich, the very hot-bed of Calvinism.

The use of the surplice, the custom of bowing at the name of Jesus, commanded by Queen Elizabeth in 1559, and the distinctive dress of the priests, had been laid aside, when Laud, in 1604, performed his exercise for Bachelor of Divinity, into which treatise he introduced those tenets which were soon conceived, or misconceived, to be tainted with Romanism.

Nevertheless, from the time when he was president of his own college, St. John's, to the moment of his promotion to the see of Canterbury, there was little real obstruction to Laud's elevation, notwithstanding that the whole of his career was one of controversy and contention, until he rose to the highest pinnacle of ecclesiastical greatness, and fell, subsequently, into the very depths of adversity.

This slight sketch is necessary to show how naturally Laud might be expected to succeed in gaining an influence over Buckingham, since he had been always engaged in winning over those of opposite opinions, and in the great battle of controversy. Cheerful, not too severe, nor even sufficiently strict, in his notions of morality, as appears from his conduct relative to Mountjoy,

Earl of Devonshire—a short, stout man, with a plump and merry visage, the very opposite of a Puritan or Calvinist minister—no man knew better than Laud how to lay aside the gravity which was unseasonable; accessible in his manners, staunch as a churchman to the interests of his order, but perfectly indifferent, personally, to the gifts of fortune, Laud delighted the great Duke, weary of fame, and perhaps of life, by the sweetness of manner and vivacity of temper which became so well men of high attainments. They were henceforth friends, until the thread of Buckingham's existence was cut short by the assassin's blow.

It is impossible to estimate too highly the effects of this intimacy upon the character of the Duke. He seems to have yielded readily to the remonstrances of Laud against the misappropriation of church revenues; and indeed, according to another authority, his own disposition accelerated the effect produced by these impressions. Buckingham was not the rapacious oppressor described by the contemporary slanderers of his time. "Oppression and avarice," observes Nichols, in his history of Leicestershire, "*he knew not.*"

Williams, Lord Keeper, the early friend of Buckingham, was now wholly discarded from the Duke's friendship, and from his presence, as

appears from a letter addressed by Williams to Sir. George Goring, and written from Foxley. The mixture of servility with religious professions; the evident desire to retain the favour of the Duke, and his own place, of course, and yet to make his case good;—and the dexterity with which all this is managed, lessen the regret that would otherwise be felt that Buckingham had lost in Williams an acute adviser, whose counsels were safer, at that juncture, than those of the earnest and fearless, but intemperate and prejudiced, Laud.

No benefit to the disgraced courtier and prelate resulted from this appeal, and the new parliament was opened in the month of February, 1626, not by Williams, but by Sir Thomas Coventry, as Lord Keeper, in a strain of fulsome adulation to the King.

But this address, followed as it was by an oration from Sir Heneage Finch, the Speaker, in terms still more exaggerated, was little regarded by the Commons, who immediately formed themselves into a committee of grievances, in which the evil resulting from bad counsellors about the King, the misappropriation of the revenue, the failure of the expedition against Cadiz, and the expenditure of the subsidy granted to the late King, formed the main points of consideration.

In vain did Charles, confirming but too closely the observations recently quoted by Lord Clarendon, resolve to defend his favourite. He addressed a letter to the Speaker, bidding him hasten the supplies. Forty ships, he stated, were ready for a second voyage, and, without an immediate grant of money, the object of that armament must be abandoned, and the navy disbanded. The Commons were adverse to any scheme founded by him whom they regarded as the very source of all the evils of which the country now complained. Buckingham was the object at whom every expression of discontent was aimed. Clement Coke, one of Sir Edward's numerous family, observed that it would be better to die from an enemy abroad than to be destroyed at home. Dr. Turner, a physician whom Sir Henry Wotton styles "a travelled doctor of physick, of bold spirit and able elocution," asked ministers whether it were not true that the loss of the King's dominions over the narrow seas were not owing to the Duke's mismanagement? Whether the enormous gifts of land and money to the Duke had not impoverished the Crown? Whether the multiplicity of offices which he held, and those whom he patronized, were not the cause of the bad government in the kingdom? Whether he did not connive

at recusants, the Duke's mother and father-in-law being both papists? Whether the sale of offices, honours, places of judicature, with ecclesiastical livings and preferments, were not owing to the Duke?

Such was the dread of court influence in that day, that courage to put these questions implied in Dr. Turner a perfect independence of action and character very unusual at that period. Clement Coke was severely reproved by his father for his boldness, and the old lawyer refused to see his son for some time; but Dr. Turner, one of the very few of his profession who have sat in the House of Commons, not only escaped censure, but gained credit by his boldness, upon which the subsequent impeachment of the Duke was grounded.

The committee to redress grievances was followed by another, which was to inquire into religious matters, more especially into the number of indulgences granted by his Majesty to recusants; for the bitterness of bigotry was not confined to the party who owned Laud as their spiritual chief; and this blow was aimed at Buckingham, whose alleged partiality to the Romish Church was one of the false and factious allegations of the day. At that time, it must be remembered, a penalty of twenty pounds a

month, by law, could be levied upon every person who frequented not divine worship.⁹³ The King, unhappily, ill-judging, ill-advised, and therefore ill-fated, and finding himself opposed for the first time, summoned the Lords and Commons to White-hall, and, addressing them, said, that whilst he was sensible of the grievances of his people, he was much more sensible of his own. He issued his express command that henceforth the two houses would desist from such unparliamentary proceedings, and leave the reformation of what was amiss to his "Majesty's care, wisdom, and justice."⁹⁴ This harangue produced no effect on the two houses, and the King and Buckingham, feeling that they had lost ground, adopted another course, and rushed into perils, from the effect of which the Duke was saved by an untimely death, but which were felt in after years with terrible force by Charles.

So long as James I. lived, the Earl of Bristol, confiding in his favour, had borne the blame of that failure in the Spanish treaty which had so greatly incensed the nation. For some time after the accession of Charles, he waited, hoping to regain his footing at the court. But when, upon the meeting of parliament, he received no

⁹³ Hume—Appendix to the Reign of James I., p. 38.

⁹⁴ Heylyn, p. 142.

writ to serve as a member, in his place, he appealed to the Lords. The writ was then sent, but the Earl was ordered on no account to appear in his place. Moreover, during the vacation, in the month of March, the Duke, certain that Bristol would impeach him, prepared articles of impeachment against the Earl, in order to be the first in the field, and to anticipate the accusations which he expected would shortly be levelled at himself. The impeachment did indeed anticipate, literally, that soon framed and delivered against the Duke.⁹⁵ The feeling of the times rendered nothing so odious to the nation as any wish or attempt to subvert the religion of the country. One of the charges against Bristol was that he assisted to introduce Popery into England ; that he was the cause of the Prince's journey into Spain, and had there wished him to change his religion ; that he advised that the son of the Elector Palatine should be brought up in the court of Spain—a project which, from a letter of Bristol's, appears to have been stated, but not suggested by Bristol. Bristol replied that these charges were merely intended to defeat those which he now formally preferred against the Duke, which seemed almost like duplicates of

⁹⁵ Brodie, ii. p. 89.

the impeachment which the Duke had preferred against him. First, that he had conspired with Gondomar to take the Prince into Spain, there to convert him to the Romish faith ; that, whilst in Spain, the Duke had flattered the King of Spain with the hopes of this conversion ; that he had absented himself from Divine service at the embassy, and had attended the Romish rites, adoring their sacraments—a course which induced the Spanish court to ask greater concessions from King James.⁹⁶ These articles, with others of less import, were followed by an impeachment from the House of Commons, who were fearful that Bristol might not be able to substantiate the charge of treason, of which they clearly saw the weakness, from the absence of motives and of proofs.⁹⁷ On the eighth of May, therefore, “a large impeachment” was drawn up against him ; it was framed by six of the ablest lawyers in the house ;⁹⁸ and related to the Duke’s engrossing of offices—his holding at the same time the posts of Lord Admiral and of Warden of the Cinque Ports—his not guarding the narrow seas—his lending a

⁹⁶ Brodie.

⁹⁷ Heylyn, 143.

⁹⁸ Heylyn, in his life of Laud, recites these names—Glandville, Herbert, Sheldon, Pym, Wansford, and Sherland ; the prologue made by Sir Dudley Digges, and the epilogue by Sir John Eliot.—Heylyn, 143.

ship called the “Vanguard” to the French King —his selling offices and honours—his waste of the Crown revenues—and, finally, his giving physic to King James at the time of his sickness,⁹⁹ applying a plaster to his chest; and that both the potion and the plaster were of a nature unknown “to surgeons, apothecaries, and physicians, and had been followed by dangerous consequences.”

Of these charges, which were styled by Hume “either frivolous, or false, or both,” only one or two articles can, with any certainty, be refuted. To commence with that made by the Earl of Bristol, relating to the conversion of Charles whilst in Spain, it appears from a letter addressed by Sir George Calvert to Secretary Conway, that the Marquis Inojosa, the Spanish Ambassador, was directed by the Countess Olivarez, in the Infanta’s name, to obtain all possible indulgences for Catholics. But no other more formal application on the subject, nor any trace of information confirming the alleged designs of Buckingham to convert Charles, have been found amongst the correspondence of that period; nor has any substantial proof of this charge been adduced by historians.* With regard to the charge of engrossing

⁹⁹ Inedited letter in the State Paper Office, 1623, vol. 28.

* A full statement of the charges may be seen in Brodie’s Constitutional History, vol. ii., p. 113, from Rushworth.

offices, the importance, if not the absolute necessity, of rescuing all maritime affairs from the ruin and neglect in which they had been suffered to remain by a former High Admiral, was so obvious at the very moment when it became necessary to assert the honour of England, that it is a matter of wonder that it should have been attempted to allege against Buckingham that which constituted his greatest merit. That the Duke had fearlessly applied himself to the restoration of the navy, has been shown by a reference to documents which have fully and completely exonerated him from that censure. It would have been of little avail for Buckingham to restore our navy, without securing the ports; in taking upon himself that office, he did not accept it as a mere dignity, to be performed by deputy, but he discharged its duties with an energy and a fidelity that very soon effected the desired end.

In the answer which he afterwards addressed to Parliament, the Duke denied having lent the ship called the "Vanguard," and six others, to the King of France—knowing that they were intended to be employed against Rochelle; he stated that he had been overreached, as the French King had pretended that he wished to make an attack on Genoa; that, so soon as he was aware of the deception, he did all he could to save

Rochelle from destruction.¹ It appeared, also, that a promise had been made by James I. to lend a ship to Louis XIII., for the reduction of Genoa. The charge of neglecting his duty as Admiral, and of having suffered the coast to be infested with pirates, has been met by those statements in a former chapter, drawn from original sources, which plainly show that the energy of this ill-fated Minister was untiring, his efforts meritorious, and that, whatever had been his former errors, they had been retrieved in his management of naval affairs. So active were his habits, that he took a personal share in every affair.² From the accusation of corruption, it would be as difficult to defend the Duke, as it was to exculpate, in this grave point, many public men in office at that period. The House of Commons was still writhing under the remembrance of the affair of Lord Middlesex, Lord Treasurer in the time of James I., who had taken two bribes, of five hundred pounds each, from the farmers of customs, without which *douceur* he refused to sign their warrants.³ For that offence, Middlesex had been punished with fine and imprisonment; but King James, whilst he was eager to sell

¹ Brodie, from Rushworth, vol. ii., p. 121.

² Inedited State Papers, 1624.

³ Inedited State Papers; date, October 11th, 1624.

the offending Earl's lands for the payment of the fine, had said that he would "review the sentence of the Parliament, and confirm it as he saw cause;" he even made a speech in behalf of the dishonest treasurer, stating that, "in such cases, the nether house was but as informers, the Lords as the jury, and himself the judge;" giving them likewise to understand "that he took it not well, nor would endure it hereafter, that they should meddle with his servants, from the highest place down to the lowest *skull* in the kitchen ; but if they had ought against any, they should complain to him, and he would see it redressed according to right."⁴

It was not, therefore, a matter of surprise that the Commons should, in a case considered still more flagrant, lose their moderation, knowing from experience how little justice their well-grounded complaints might receive at the hands of a monarch who had imbibed from his cradle such sentiments as those expressed by James I.

It was publicly known that offices, both about the person of the King and in the state, were sold. In the last reign, the mastership of the jewels had been bought by Sir Henry Caire for 2,000*l.* or 3,000*l.*, from Sir Henry Mildmay, who

⁴ Letter from Mr. Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton. Inedited State Papers, June 5th, 1624.

was "thought too young a man, and of too mean a state" to be safely entrusted with the King's jewels.⁵ Buckingham, however, seems to have had no direct interest in this transaction. Other instances were also adduced; and proofs of corruption somewhere were open to every mind. Lord Middlesex, when Sir Lionel Cranfield, was stated to have given the Duke 6,000*l.* for his place as keeper of the wardrobe;⁶ but it seems that he purchased that post from Lord Hay, and not from Buckingham, as the following extract from the State Papers, of the year 1618, implies:—

"Sir Lionel Cranfield is not yet master of the wardrobe, nor likely to be, unless he give a *viaticum* to the Lord Hay, who, they say, stands upon 9,000*l.*"⁷ It does not, therefore, appear certain that Buckingham received either of the bribes; although it is not improbable that, since nothing could take place without his concurrence, he might have accepted some part of the spoil. Of the other two allegations—namely, that he received from Lord Roberts 10,000*l.* for his title, and that he sold the office of treasurer to Lord Manchester for 20,000*l.*, there seems no certainty;

⁵ *Inedited State Papers.* January, 1617—18.

⁶ Brodie, vol. i., p. 118.

⁷ Dated August 20th, 1618.

but no letters are to be found in the very minute daily correspondence of that period, between the members of the Duke's household and the Court, which either take the burden of the charge from him, or remove it to any other person.

The Duke was also stated, in the impeachment, to have purchased the offices of Lord High Admiral, and of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. Such was the colour given to a transaction which is generally recognized as a matter of compensation. "To the Earl of Nottingham, the old and incompetent admiral, the pension of 3,000*l.* yearly was allotted, together with a good round sum of ready money;" to Margaret, Countess of Nottingham, according to one account, a pension of 1,000*l.*, to commence at the death of the Earl, and 500*l.* to his eldest son by her.⁸ According to another statement, the pension to the Countess was not to exceed 600*l.*; to her son, Charles Howard, 500*l.* a year; and to her daughter, Anne Howard, 200*l.* a year—after the death of their father.⁹

Lord Zouch, meantime, the former Warden of the Cinque Ports, was perfectly satisfied with the

⁸ Inherited State Papers, 1625. This sum was eventually reduced to 5,000*l.*

⁹ Letter from Secretary Nameton.—State Paper Office, Oct. 18, 1618.

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compensation of 500*l.* a year, secured on lands, and 1,000*l.* ready money, in lieu of his office.¹⁰ Surely, if arrangements like these, completed without secrecy, and known to every gossip of the Court, be deemed corrupt and illegal, every minister of modern times might be liable to a similar imputation.

Another charge was that Buckingham had procured titles of honours for his allies, and pensions to support them; had embezzled the King's money, and obtained grants of Crown lands to an enormous value.¹¹ A list of his titles and offices proves, indeed, the blind and almost insane partiality which had placed the favourite on the pinnacle of power.

The statement of his possessions is equally amazing, more especially when we consider his origin and his early difficulties. Crown lands, to the value of 284,895*l.*, had been allotted to the Duke, "besides the Forest of Layfield—the profit made out of the strangers' goods—and the moiety of the customs in Ireland." And yet the Duke avowed before Parliament that his debts amounted to 100,000*l.*,¹² and we find, as a sad confirmation of the charge, among the documents in the

¹⁰ *Inedited State Papers.*

¹¹ *Brodie*, vol. ii., p. 113.

¹² *Ibid.* 123.

State Paper Office, a warrant of payment of 2,500*l.* to Sir William Russell, for interest of 30,000*l.* advanced to the Duke of Buckingham by his Majesty's orders.¹³ Even the money given him, it was justly alleged, was a small sum compared with that which the Duke had derived from other sources. "How then," asked Mr. Shерland, one of the managers of the impeachment, "can we hope to satisfy his prodigality, if this be true? If false, how can we hope to satisfy his covetousness? And, therefore, your lordships need not wonder if the Commons desire, and that earnestly, to be delivered from such a grievance."

Finally, the Duke was charged with having either intentionally, or unintentionally, accelerated the death of King James.

The imprudent interference of Buckingham, under the influence of his mother, with the medical treatment of the King, was adduced as a proof of guilt. The absurdity of this charge, which was afterwards taken up with much bitterness by both parties in that time of violent discussion, seems to throw a doubt upon the whole impeachment.

The same members who had before recited the enormous gifts and lavish generosity of King James

¹³ Date, March 6, 1625.

to his favourite, now taxed the very man who had only to ask, to obtain, with the murder of one who was loading him with benefits. The disease of King James, Heylyn reports, "was no other than an ague, which, though it fell on him in the spring, crossed the proverb, and proved, not medicinal, but mortal."¹⁴ The King was old, not indeed in years, but in constitution; the wonder was not that he died before the full span of age was complete, but that he lived so long. The appearance of the body after death has been insisted upon by Whitelocke as a proof of poison; but it is well known that in many diseases this appearance occurs, especially in affections of the heart, a class of complaint but little understood in those times, but a malady that is not unfrequently the result of rheumatic affections, to which James seems to have been liable.

Wandesford, one of the chief speakers on this occasion, declares that the "poor and loyal Commons of England were troubled at hearing that great distempers followed the drink and plaisters which Buckingham had pressed on the King—droughts, raving, faintness, and intermitting pulse;" these are, however, the usual concomitants of that passage through the valley of the shadow of death which precedes a final dissolution; the plaster

¹⁴ Life of Archbishop Laud.

was declared to have driven the complaint inwards; both the administration of the drink, or posset, and the application of the plaster, were avowed by Buckingham, who protested that neither of these intended remedies had been used without the permission of the physicians; on hearing a rumour that he had done so, Buckingham affirmed that he went to the dying king, who exclaimed, 'They are worse than devils who say so.'"²⁷

On the whole, this part of the impeachment seems to have fallen to the ground; and we are disposed to credit Clarendon, who states that though "investigated in a time of great licence, 'no criminality was discovered.' " King Charles also became afterwards the subject of aspersions on this point—one of those slanderous and impossible accusations that weaken all the previous charges, and taint them with the hue of malice.

It is remarkable, as Hume observes, that the most vulnerable point in Lord Bristol's attack was altogether ignored by the Commons in this "large impeachment." The most blamable circumstance in Buckingham's whole life, as the same historian observes, was the Duke's conduct in breaking the Spanish treaty, and in hurrying the nation into a war in order to gratify his private passions. But there was a general conviction of the

²⁷ Brodie, vol. ii., p. 125.

insincerity of Spain ; and the unjustifiable conduct of the Duke, in the affairs relative to that country, was suffered to escape unnoticed, whilst charges, almost untenable, were got up in the hope of ruining him with the King.

Charles was, however, infatuated. His youth and inexperience, the pernicious example set him by his father, plead for *him*, but nothing can extenuate the want of manly boldness in Buckingham, in not facing his foes and demanding a trial. His answers to the impeachment, thirteen in number, were, it is true, to borrow the words of Sir Henry Wotton, "very diligently and civilly couched," and "soured of an humble spirit, though his heart was big." One consideration swayed with the public, which was, that in the "bolting and sifting of near fourteen years of such power and favour, all that came out could not be expected to be pure and white, and fine metal ; but must needs have withal among it a certain mixture of padars and bran in this lower range of humane fragility."²⁸

The Duke's answers were very clear and satisfactory,²⁹ and his address to the Lords appears to have been ingenuous and courteous. He reminded them how full of danger and prejudice it was to give

²⁸ Sir Henry Wotton, p. 225.

²⁹ Hume.

too ready an ear, too easy a belief, to reports and testimony not upon oath; upon such allegations none ought, he argued, to be condemned. Then, with a grace that was natural to him, he acknowledged, with humility, "how easy a thing it was for him in his younger years, when inexperienced, to fall into thousands of errors in these two years wherein he had the honour to serve so great and so open-hearted a master."³⁰ He concluded with professions of attachment to the Church of England, hoping that for the future "he might watch over all his actions, public and private, so as not to give cause of just offence to any one." And such was probably his sincere determination; and Buckingham, had he lived, might have proved an excellent and, as times went, an honest minister.

The answer of Buckingham, as well as the speech of the King to his Commons, on the 29th of March, was ascribed to the pen of Laud; but Heylyn disavows that statement. Yet there is little doubt that Laud prompted the Duke's cautious and submissive reply on the one hand, and encouraged, if he did not prompt, the King's arbitrary and unconstitutional conduct to the Commons.

The tempest, violent as it seemed, "did," as

* Heylyn, p. 144.

Sir Henry Wotton remarks, “only shake and not rent” the Duke’s sails. Charles, taking as a plea that many of the accusations were not within the compass of his own reign, and also that nothing had been proved against Buckingham on oath, resolved to brave the storm in such a manner as to bring down its force upon himself.

He lost, therefore, no opportunity of showing his contempt for the House of Commons. “No one,” Hume observes, “was at that time sufficiently sensible of the great weight which the Commons bore in the balance of the Constitution.” Nothing but “fatal experience could induce the English princes to pay a due regard to the inclinations of that formidable assembly.”³¹

“This was indeed,” Lord Campbell remarks, “the great crisis of the English Constitution. Had our distinguished patriots then quailed, Parliaments would thenceforth have been merely the subject of antiquarian research, or perhaps occasionally summoned to register the edicts of the Crown.”³² “The state,” as Sir Edward Coke declared in Parliament, “was in a consumption, yet not incurable.” It was his courage and honesty that helped to effect a cure.

Charles, considering that he was himself aimed

³¹ Hume, vol. vi., p. 179.

³² Lives of the Chancellors, vol. i., p. 325.

at in the allegations against the Duke, commanded the House expressly not to interfere with his servant Buckingham, and ordered it to conclude the bill for the subsidies which they had begun, intimating that if that were not done it should sit no longer. Instead of referring the case to the Lords, and insisting on the affair being brought to a trial before that body, he went himself to the House of Lords, and declared his intention of clearing the Duke by his own testimony. The Commons had, on that very day, moved that the Duke should be committed to the Tower until the issue of his trial should be known. That motion was rejected; in vain did Buckingham attempt to explain and soften down this conduct in a speech to the Lords. Sir Dudley Digges and Sir John Eliot were thrown into prison, and although they were soon liberated, the Commons immediately declared that they would not proceed with any business whatsoever until satisfaction should be given for this breach of privilege.

Unhappily, all these discords were aggravated nearly to frenzy by the bitterest of all passions—religious intolerance. Whilst we must applaud, with all gratitude, the lofty and honest spirit which opposed acts of despotism—a spirit to which we owe our present pre-eminence as a free and powerful nation—we must deprecate the remorse-

less oppressions which the friends of liberty scrupled not to inflict on those who thought on religious matters differently from themselves.

It was an expensive matter in those days to have a conscience. Although the penalty of twenty pounds per month, enacted during the reign of Elizabeth, had been mitigated according to the circumstances of families, or suffered in some instances to run on for years, it was occasionally levied all at once, to the ruin of the unhappy Romanist families who conscientiously refused to attend the worship of the Established Church. James I. had mercifully relaxed the severity of these penalties; but his successor was now called upon by the Puritan party in the House of Commons to restore them to their original force. The Church was at this epoch far more induced to grant indulgence than the laity, who, it is strange to say, were the most intolerant among the persecutors of the depressed body of Roman Catholics. Disappointed in their impeachment of Buckingham, the Commons now presented to the King a list of recusants who had been entrusted with offices in the State.

This petition was aimed, of course, at Buckingham, whose mother was a Catholic, and whose wife had been long suspected of holding the tenets of the Romish Church. It was thought

sufficient in those times to have a near relation a Romanist, to be disqualified for office.³³

Queen Elizabeth, as we have before observed, when she had any point to gain with her people, used "to tune the pulpits," as she termed it. It was her practice to have a reserve of preachers ready to extol her designs in or near London, to influential congregations, whenever she required the help of their eloquence.³⁴ This plan was now adopted by Charles, and Laud was employed to call the attention of the public to the cause of the King of Denmark, who had been driven to the last extremity by Count Tilly. The King of Denmark being a Protestant, it was hoped that this scheme would propitiate the party who so vehemently endeavoured to compass the downfall of Buckingham, and who were, for the most part, Puritans.

Unhappily the plan did more harm than good; its motives and signification were suspected, nay, even proclaimed by some of the simple clergy; and Sibthorpe, the Vicar of Brackley, in Northamptonshire—at an assize sermon—gave out plainly that the burden of those instructions which had been distributed among the priesthood was "to show the lawfulness of the general loan which the

³³ Hume, from Franklyn, p. 195.

³⁴ Heylyn, p. 153.

King now contemplated raising, in lieu of the supplies; to prove the King's right to impose taxes without the consent of Parliament; and to insist that the people ought cheerfully to submit to such loans and taxes."

The publication of this sermon was forbidden by Archbishop Abbot,²⁵ for it was then illegal to print any book without a permission from the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of London, or the Vice-chancellor of one of the Universities, or some person appointed by them;²⁶ and two fearful Courts of Star-chamber and High Commission threatened any delinquent who attempted to do then what now requires merely the consent of a publisher. Although Abbot had so wisely prohibited Sibthorpe's discourse, he could not save the King whom Buckingham and Laud counselled. The audacious sermon was published during the following year, under the almost impious title of "Apostolic Obedience."

²⁵ Heylyn, p. 159.

²⁶ Hume, p. 129.

END OF VOL. II.



